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**WWE SMACKDOWN!
VS RAW 2006**

"You can't see me!"

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ISSUE 02



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***ALL THE STATS, ALL THE ACTION,
ALL THE TIME!***



Championship Manager on PSP



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A large, detailed illustration of Lara Croft from the Tomb Raider series. She is shown from the waist up, wearing her signature olive green short-sleeved crop top and black tactical vest. She has long dark hair and is looking over her shoulder towards the viewer. She is holding a black handgun in her right hand, which is gloved. The background is dark and textured.

WELCOME



A NEW ISSUE, a new editor but the same mission to provide the best PSP coverage on the newsstands. When the opportunity presented itself to work on a magazine dedicated to the most exciting piece of kit since the iPod, it was too good a chance to

turn down. If you already invested in a PSP you'll know exactly what all the fuss is about. It's the coming together of all the great entertainment media of our time into one incredibly elegant and svelte unit. It's a master of all trades, enabling you to listen to music, play games of true current generation quality and enjoy movies in gorgeous wide-screen clarity. In a technologically jaded world, the PSP's impact has been truly remarkable.

It's almost frightening then, to consider that the best is yet to come. As developers get more comfortable with the machine, we'll see more of its potential unlocked. Second generation software always blows the launch stuff away and that's enough to give anyone a warm, squishy sensation. Just check out our exclusive hands-on with the amazing *Tomb Raider: Legend* and this month's feature packed with tantalising glimpses of what to expect in 2006. True dat.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Miles Guttery. The signature is written in white ink on a dark background. It features a large, flowing 'M' and 'G' with a small skull icon integrated into the letter 'i'.

Miles Guttery, Editor

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Exclusive hands on with Lara. Hubba!

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Results

League One - Wed, 22.08.07

19th	Blackpool	2	1	Wrexham	10th
23rd	Cardiff City	1	1	Torquay United	3rd
17th	Colchester United	1	1	Leyton Orient	24th
16th	Crewe Alexandra	2	2	Oldham Athletic	4th
6th	Milton Keynes Dons	3	1	Bristol Rovers	5th
20th	Plymouth Argyle	1	1	Darlington	11th
10th	Preston North End	2	4	Hull City	25th
2nd	Reading	3	1	Bristol City	6th
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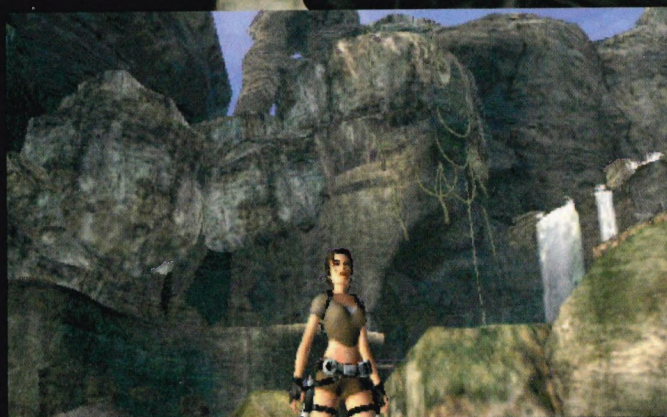
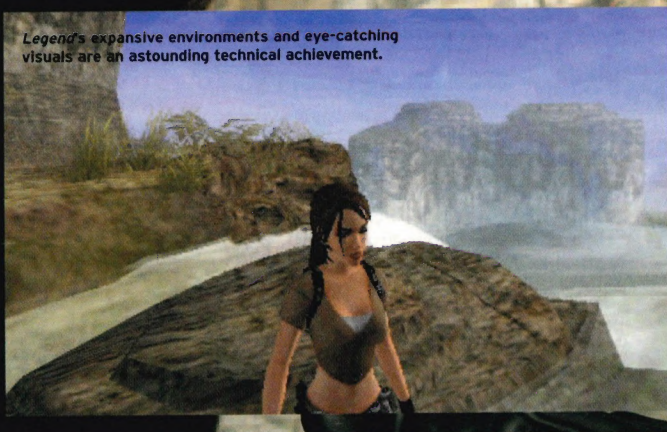
» Here's what you've got to look forward to in 2006. Well, all the stuff we know about anyway.



TOMBSHAKA LA KA!

The queen of PlayStation makes her portable debut, but is **Tomb Raider: Legend** her crowning glory?

Legend's expansive environments and eye-catching visuals are an astounding technical achievement.





Lara's latest outing drips with atmospheric tension thanks to impressive dynamic lighting.



It's been quite a year for comebacks. From Liverpool's miraculous recovery against AC Milan in Istanbul, to Madonna's surge back to the top of the charts, and Chris Evans' return to our television screens, the past few months have proved the infinite folly of hastily writing off anyone's chances.

It's more than a little fitting, then, that the videogame world is currently bracing itself for the return of an equally iconic figure.

It was almost a decade ago that Lara Croft first swung onto the PlayStation and into our consciousness with a winning blend of action and adventure, puzzles and platforming. And it's been three long years since her last outing met with an equally forceful reaction. Universally derided, *Angel Of Darkness* seemed to mark the wretched nadir of a franchise that had lost its way, and no longer seemed capable of providing a new generation of gamers with the thrills they sought.

Behind that prim upper class accent, however, Lara Croft has always been a pugnacious sort, and it's no surprise that Eidos' heroine has come back fighting, starring in a brand new adventure that's been two years in the making, and which will see the hot pant-clad archaeologist make her portable debut with an appearance on the PSP.

Unsurprisingly, the news of her return hasn't generated quite the fanfare that Eidos had hoped. For many, the sour taste left by the steady demise of a series that incorporated some six releases on a plethora of different platforms, and was more noticeable for the protagonist's steadily expanding chest than increasingly action-packed adventures, is proving difficult to shake.

Winning back disillusioned fans and appealing to an entirely new generation of gamers, many of whom have no knowledge of the series' former glories, while simultaneously transferring the ancient ruins and epic adventures onto Sony's handheld, with its unique specifications and requirements - this is the challenge facing *Tomb Raider: Legend*. It's somewhat appropriate, then, that in seeking to revive the illustrious

Greg Hounson. "That meant taking Lara back to the tombs, back to where she belongs.

We've moved her out of the modern day environments, like Paris and Prague, where she found herself within more recent games, and placed her back in the tombs, exploring ancient temples and relics. That's the key."

If Hounson refuses to pull punches, even admitting that *Angel Of Darkness* was "a big

[the most important move in the history of the franchise]

archaeologist, Eidos has been digging about in the past.

"The whole philosophy for *Tomb Raider: Legend* was to take the series back to basics, to what made Tomb Raider so wonderful and such a success in the first place," says Senior Producer

disappointment for many, many people", it's because he's speaking with the authority of the most important people in the development process - us.

"We decided to start by listening to the consumers, and to find out what most



3. A revolutionary Fluid Movement System marks a long overdue overhaul of Tomb Raider's controls.



Central to the back to basics strategy for *Legend* was a move away from modern day

Model behaviour

The changing shape of Lara Croft



Toby Gard returned to work on his iconic creation as part of the development team.



Lara to PSP meant creating a dynamic new in-game camera.

disappointed them, and how to inject some life back into *Tomb Raider*," he reveals. "We spent the best part of nine months in forums, talking to people, visiting fan websites, and listening to people's comments about what they wanted to see next."

Armed with that information, Eidos made what might be the most important move in the history of the franchise - transferring development to the California headquarters of Crystal Dynamics, the studio behind the acclaimed *Soul Reaver* and *Legacy Of Kain* games.

"Crystal really seemed the obvious choice," explains Hounson, "because it's not only very technically accomplished, but also renowned for producing wonderfully lavish environments and the lush, dynamic worlds we wanted to create."

That's important on the PSP because the screen is so great, and I think just by the opening sequence you can see how well it's worked." Fortunately, he's right.

The opening sequence in question begins with a stunning panorama, slowly zooming in on the unmistakable figure of Lara, who clings to the sheer wall of a seemingly infinite stretch of treacherous cliff face.

As the camera steadily moves in on her face, a picture of pained concentration, the coarse texture of the rocky terrain itself is brought into focus. And then, in a sudden rush of colour and whirr of movement, her lithe frame arches backwards and launches into a trademark swan dive.



The action moved out of tombs, the puzzles disappeared, and the series steadily lost its lustre, as the spirit of cold-hearted commercialism diluted the innocent charm of the original adventure.

Yes, the evolution of *Tomb Raider* heralded all these things, but the series' progression is best remembered for Lara's cosmetic changes.

As quickly as Toby Gard's digital creation assumed the mantle of sex symbol, so Lara Croft seemed to undergo a host of physical changes.

Her chest expanded to a whopping 36DD, her outfits began to get more and more revealing, and her iconic image was plastered over all manner of products, both within and outside the realm of videogames.

So it's hardly surprising to learn that she's looking a little different these days. The intrepid explorer will be a whole decade older by the time she hits the shelves again next year, though it's a shock to hear that she's looking better than ever.

"She just looks really great these days," grins Greg Hounson, Senior Producer on *Tomb Raider: Legend*. "She's gone from being 4,500 polygons in *Angel Of Darkness* to just over 9,000 polygons now, so that enables us to add the detail to bring her to life, and give her a bit more personality."

In a shocking reversal, Lara's actually had her chest reduced - as Croft experts will no doubt have noticed, she's gone down a bra-size or two to an infinitely more manageable 34D - while another organ, we're promised, has been increased - her brain.

"She's been completely redesigned," says Hounson, adding that her reduced chest is indicative of the more cerebral approach signified by a return to the series' puzzle elements.

"Toby Gard, the original creator of Lara Croft, is now back at Crystal Dynamics, and that's part of the back to basics philosophy we wanted."

"It's just an unbelievable coup to have Toby back on the team, and he's played a hugely inspirational part in helping the team get Lara right, getting her to look right, feel right, and play right."



As the camera races to catch up with our airborne heroine, we glimpse flashes of tropical undergrowth and the emerald sea below, until Lara grabs hold of another ledge, and with a shuddering jolt our view steadies.

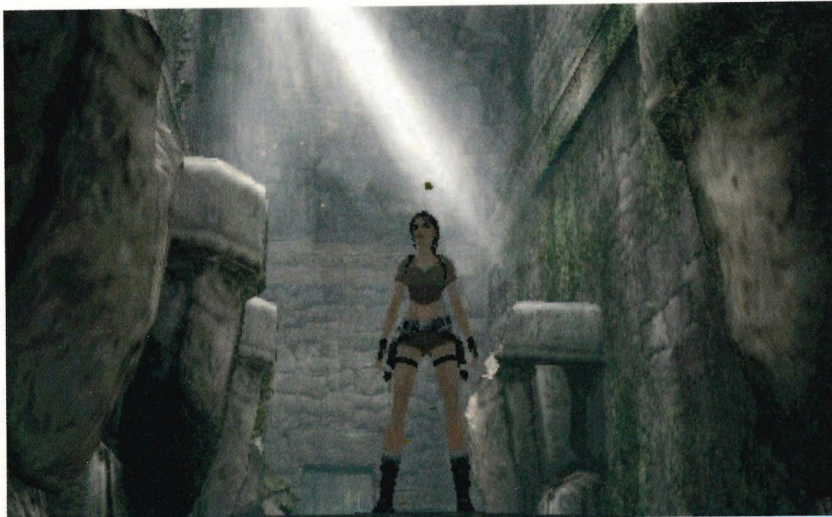
It would rank as an exhilarating sequence on any platform, an early glimpse at the sumptuous backdrops and heady thrills that *Tomb Raider: Legend* promises, and happily delivers. On the PSP, however, it has to rank as the most astounding visual achievement we've yet seen. And that's just the beginning.

Each of the game's ten levels incorporates a different, unique and impossibly vast environment, and each manages to top the intoxicating graphical highs of the last. Among the awe-inspiring landscapes we witnessed, a titanic cascading waterfall, which slowly parts to reveal the crumbling entrance of an ornate tomb, deserves special mention.

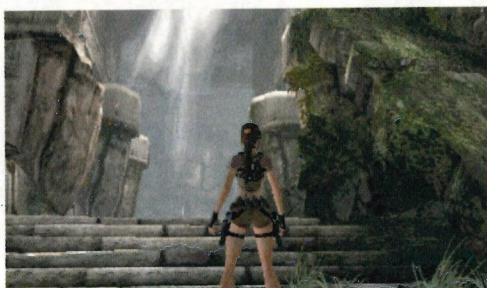
These lavish backdrops are more than matched by the high-octane bursts of frenetic action that occur when Lara showcases her combat skills and trademark two-handed gunplay. In one early encounter with a horde of armed guards, the iconic adventurer blasts her way through the entire squadron in a cacophonous blaze of gunfire, dextrously gliding through the ancient environment before taking down the lone surviving adversary in an exhilarating slow-motion interlude.

It's not just these grand, cinematic sequences that underline the scope of *Tomb Raider: Legend's* visual accomplishments. Rather, the game boasts an eye for detail that's unparalleled on a portable console. Watch Lara emerge from the water, for instance, and she actually looks drenched - her clothes are darker, her hair appears damp and clings to the back of her neck, and her limbs glisten with tiny droplets of water.

Equally stunning is the game's use of light and dark, particularly during the stages when Lara is forced to rely



○ An astonishing level of detail means Lara's appearance changes during each level, getting dirty or drenched as she progresses through each stage.



○ Breathtaking relics and cavernous chambers look stunning on the PSP's widescreen format.



○ Nice 'tomb' meet you.

Two can play that game?

Legend producer hints at PSP multiplayer mode

With the portable edition of *Tomb Raider: Legend* already looking like a carbon copy of the PS2 version, matching its big brother for eye-catching visuals and high-octane action, PSP owners have clearly got a lot to look forward to.

And tantalisingly, that might extend to connectivity with the PS2 version and additional Wi-Fi game modes by the time Lara's latest outing hits the shelves.

Though Eidos refused to confirm any details of this mooted extra content, Senior Producer Greg Hounson did raise the prospect of PSP-specific features and even the mouth-watering possibility of a multiplayer mode.

"We've played around with many different ideas, although none of them have been confirmed as yet," he admitted when pressed on the subject. "But naturally there's been thoughts about Wi-Fi, and how a multiplayer mode could be added to the game without feeling like it's there just for the sake of it. The key is it has to be good, and has to be there for a reason."

Though Eidos remains tight-lipped about the specifics of what any multiplayer mode might entail, the development team has even considered which characters might be available should the option be included in the final release of the game.

"Obviously, within the ten years that Lara's been around, there have been various other characters - good and bad characters - that have come into her world, so we've played around with how we could put her head to head with some of them in multiplayer situations," reveals Hounson.

"I would say that there are probably one or two characters that would suit that sort of role, acting as either adversary or comrade to Lara. But obviously they'd need to be strong characters, because Lara's got a very strong personality and nothing gets in her way, and it would need a character that's almost equal to her to make it a good competition."

With that in mind, it's almost certain that *Angel of Darkness' Kurtis Trent* would make another appearance, though it's difficult to think who else might crop up. Hounson though is at pains to emphasise that none of these details can be confirmed until closer to the release date.

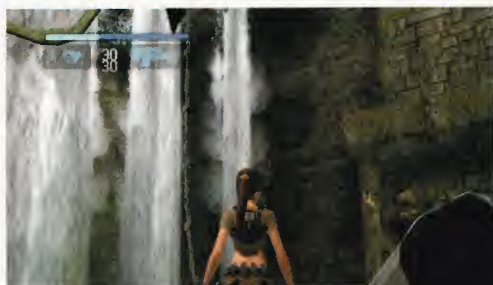
Similarly up in the air are plans to introduce an element of connectivity between the PS2 and PSP versions of the game.

"Another idea we've had is to enable the player to take a game save from the PS2, download it onto their PSP, and continue their game while on the move," Hounson says. "And when they've finished using the PSP, and come back home, allowing them to transfer it back to PS2, and continue."

Though Hounson is unwilling to say whether any of these elements will make the final cut of *Tomb Raider: Legend*, we'd be willing to put a sizeable wager on one or two surprises being tucked away come release time.



[an eye for
detail that's
unparalleled on a
portable console]



As well as a return to the toms, *Legend* also promises to return the puzzle elements of the original back to the franchise.

on her personal light source - an attachable torch - to illuminate the screen. Journey deep into certain toms, and Lara will find herself plunged into darkness.

Switching on the personal light source will light up the way, attracting a flutter of fireflies in the process, but only for a few moments.

The torch runs out after a matter of minutes, and you'll be cloaked in darkness once again while you wait for it to recharge. The result is a tension-fuelled journey through cavernous corridors that drip with menace and foreboding.

These ominous, atmospheric stages are testament to the technical know-how that Crystal Dynamics brought

to the table. "One of the key strengths of Crystal is its technical ability and visual expertise," says Hounson, "and with that comes dynamic lighting and shadowing, and, in particular, the darkened levels make very sophisticated use of this, meaning the personal light source really comes into its own."

Stages like these succeed in setting you on edge and ratcheting up the tension because *Legend* works so hard to draw you into Lara's world. And if its wondrous visuals are a means to achieving this, the absence of any HUD helps immerse you further.

"We didn't feel the need to constantly remind the player how much ammunition Lara's got, and what features are open to them," reasons Hounson, "and one way we got around that is

with the Lara model itself - any equipment she's carrying is actually visible on her body."

Gone, then, is Lara's magic rucksack, which miraculously managed to carry an arsenal big enough to dispose of a small country. Rather, everything from her trademark dual pistols, the standard collection of

frag grenades, even her shiny pair of binoculars, are all clearly visible on her belt, doing away with the need for onscreen clues that clutter the screen. It's all entirely in keeping with Hounson's back to basics philosophy, returning the series to its simple roots and making the game as instantly intuitive as possible.

It was this ethos that persuaded Hounson and the development team at Creative that the control method, Lara's movements, and her entire animation set needed a radical overhaul.

"Lara never really evolved from previous *Tomb Raider* games, and her animation system really hadn't been updated at all," says Hounson, "so the team got to work on what we call the Fluid Movement System, which allows Lara to move without any limitations, and reach the points where she can interact with the environment throughout the levels."

[a triumphant return to form]

Certainly *Tomb Raider: Legend* feels very different to past instalments of the series, and navigating Lara through the leafy tropical undergrowth of the opening stage is instantly liberating for anyone who recalls her jerky, clunky passage through previous adventures.

But it's the freedom it afforded the level designers that really sets the Fluid Movement System apart as the key innovation served up in this outing.

"That gave our designers the chance to build the levels around Lara's move set, and be much more creative and versatile within an already established movement system, rather than developing the environments, dropping the character in, and hoping that everything works out," adds Hounson.

This newfound freedom is immediately obvious in the intricately designed, impossibly vast environments that represent the game's different stages. Though Hounson insists that each of the ten levels is essentially "a journey to find a main nucleus - one big room that you discover,

[Tomb Raider: Legend
feels very different to
past instalments of
the series]



O Legend's Fluid Movement System means there are no limits to Lara's movements, allowing her to interact with each different environment.

which has lain untouched for many, many years", reaching that nucleus isn't exactly a cakewalk.

That's because the developer has concentrated on reintroducing the puzzle element that set the *Tomb Raider* franchise apart from so many of its competitors in the crowded action adventure genre, but which was largely ignored in later Lara Croft outings.

"Puzzles played a key part in *Tomb Raider*," Hounson agrees, "and you had to think laterally at certain points to move on. *Tomb Raider* was never just another platformer; it was always known as a thinker as well. And we wanted to re-establish that for *Tomb Raider: Legend*."

On the evidence of the handful of levels we played this month, Hounson's team has done just that. Whether it involved elaborate routes, extravagant leaps from ledges, or a complex series of pressure plates, navigating Lara through the dusty chambers of ornate tombs required us to pause for thought a number of times. Not so much that the sense of urgency was lost, or individual stages seemed to lag, but enough to make advancing through each level a suitably rewarding experience.

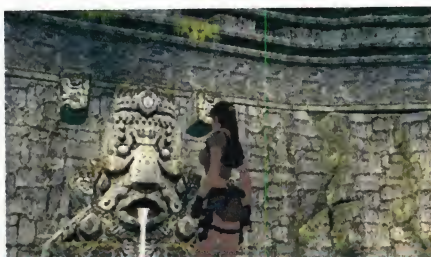
If expansive stages punctuated by devious puzzles, played out in sumptuous environments hints at the depth offered by Lara's latest adventure, it also raises a

[awe-inspiring technical achievement]

worrying spectre for PSP owners. Namely, insufferably long load times. Happily, however, Eidos insists these will be mercifully short thanks to a streaming loading system that will generate stages as you progress through previous sequences.

"You'll have one loading screen at the beginning, which will be pretty short because all we're doing is loading that first section of the level, and then the rest of the environment will be streaming directly from the disc," Hounson assures us. "So there's hardly any need for loading times. The only time you'll get that's between environments, and we've managed to mask a lot of that time within the cut-scenes as well, so while you're watching the cut-scenes, you'll be loading the next level."

Equally reassuring were our early impressions of the in-game camera, which has likewise proved problematic for some games on PSP. *Tomb Raider* sidesteps the issue by featuring a dynamic camera that trails Lara throughout the environments, constantly readjusting so as to offer the best perspective of the action. Happily it seemed more than satisfactory during our hands on time with *Tomb Raider*, though we were grateful for the inclusion of a manual camera, activated by pressing a face button while moving the analogue nub, and the camera reset function offered by a shoulder trigger.



Every element of *Tomb Raider* has been tried and tested to ensure a flawless adventure.

Hounson seems convinced that the camera will not detract from the *Tomb Raider* experience, just as he's certain the controls and gameplay are optimised for the enjoyment of *Tomb Raider* aficionados, because he has the facts to back it up. Listening to him talk us through the game, it sounds as though every tiny ingredient has been deliberated, tried and tested by focus groups, to ensure that the final product is virtually flawless.

"We're still doing some focus group testing," Hounson admits cheerily, "and we're still trying to work out how we can utilise the PSP platform even better, to provide the same experience you'd get from a normal console, so we're actually still in that process of refining the game. But honestly I'm really looking forward to getting the game out there, into the hands of gamers now, and seeing how they react to it."

From the evidence of the good few hours we spent with *Lara at Eidos' London offices*, listening to Greg talk us through a game he's obviously desperate to succeed, we came away firmly convinced that *Tomb Raider: Legend* will mark a triumphant return to form for the series, suggesting Lara Croft will indeed benefit from a Lazarus-like comeback.

We suspect this much would have been clear, however, from a look at the game on any of the multiple formats for which it's destined. As for the PSP edition, there's just one niggling doubt that stops us lauding the title as a future classic.

And that's the size of the game. It's such an accurate recreation of the PS2 version, such an awe-inspiring technical achievement, but how will such a vast game translate to portable gaming? How will ten minute snatches on the bus, and half hour bursts during lunch, maintain our interest when individual levels will take hours to finish?

Though Hounson promises us that "We're looking at ways that we can perhaps tailor things a little bit differently, such as the save points", he admits "The actual content, for the single player game at least, won't be hugely different to PS2."

It's telling, however, that he doesn't seem overly concerned, choosing to reiterate that the development team has treated the PSP version independently, and that he's determined to make a success of *Tomb Raider's* debut on Sony handheld. And it's this steely determination that has us convinced that Lara will make the jump onto PSP as effortlessly as she leaped between platforms throughout her career. ■

Boom to bust

How Lara Croft went from digital darling to cyber punk

1996 TOMB RAIDER

PLAYSTATION, SATURN, MAC/PC

The first game in the series was the most technically groundbreaking by quite a distance. Arriving at the dawn of 3D gaming, almost a full year before *Super Mario 64*, *Tomb Raider* wowed audiences with the smoothest iteration of polygon-based platforming yet seen, and enchanted them with its enormous environments. And in Lara Croft, Core's nascent franchise provided us with what was the first unforgettable character of the 32-bit generation.

1997 TOMB RAIDER II

PLAYSTATION, MAC/PC

Just a year after the blockbuster success of *Tomb Raider*, Lara was back, starring in a critically acclaimed sequel still widely considered the pinnacle of the series. While the gameplay remained virtually untouched, *Tomb Raider II* boasted an extra sheen, making for an even more enthralling experience than the original.

1998 TOMB RAIDER III

PLAYSTATION, MAC/PC

By the time this third instalment in just three years hit the shelves, most of the original design team were no longer involved. Most significantly, *Tomb Raider* creator Toby Gard had left Core to set up his own studio,

apparently uneasy with the marketing of his iconic heroine as sex symbol for the cyber generation. Most worryingly for the franchise, the overriding impression created by *Tomb Raider III* was one of stagnation. The game engine had hardly advanced since Lara's first outing, and the gameplay began to feel tired, repetitive and uninspired.

1999 TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

PLAYSTATION, DREAMCAST, MAC/PC

Despite dissenting voices for the first time in *Tomb Raider's* brief history following the release of the third game, Eidos ploughed on regardless, releasing a new *Tomb Raider* game for the fourth time in consecutive years. *The Last Revelation* was technically the first game on the current generation, though in truth the Dreamcast version was a dreary port of the PlayStation release. Where the third game felt derivative, this was well and truly stale. Once more the in-game mechanics went virtually untouched, and where the original *Tomb Raider* had been a revolutionary landmark, this fourth chapter reeked of a franchise slowly rotting away.

2000 TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

PLAYSTATION, DREAMCAST, MAC/PC

The dismal low point of the series, and a by-word for corporate complacency. Ignoring the howls for the mechanics to be upgraded, Eidos persisted with Gard's four-year-old game engine, releasing a fifth *Tomb Raider* title on PSone despite the fact that most of the gamers who enjoyed Lara's debut had left the system behind, moving on to

the PlayStation2. Though the development team tried its best to add some spice to the series with a convoluted back-story, *Chronicles* was a disaster – a lazy rehash of the previous titles, completely devoid of any originality, that heralded the end of Lara's 32-bit adventure.

2003 LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER – THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

PLAYSTATION 2, MAC/PC

Despite a three-year interval to work on Lara's transition to PS2, there were ominous portents for *Angel Of Darkness* when its release date slipped further and further back. Even so, the game felt rushed when it hit the shelves. Due in part to unrealistic expectations whipped up by the numerous delays, critics rounded on *Angel Of Darkness*, and fans of the first instalments stayed away, long since having moved on to the likes of *Metal Gear* and *Splinter Cell*. Even Paramount Pictures slammed the game for contributing to poor box office receipts for the second *Tomb Raider* film, *Cradle of Life*.

2006 TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

PLAYSTATION 2, PLAYSTATION PORTABLE, XBOX, XBOX 360, PC

Where Lara Croft had once been a symbol for innovation, when the dust settled on *Angel Of Darkness*, the decrepit *Tomb Raider* franchise felt like a moribund albatross around Eidos' neck. Struggling sales and increased development costs hit the publisher hard, and the powerhouse of the 32-bit era was struggling to stay afloat until it was bought by SCI Entertainment in May this year. This, then, is *Tomb Raider's* legacy, and if *Tomb Raider: Legend* is to reverse this downward spiral, it's going to have to buck the weight of history.

INSIDER

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF PSP GAMING

BREAKING NEWS

GEAR WE GO AGAIN

Konami's legendary developer announces new Metal Gear title for PSP

[Kojima admitted that the game will offer a "completely new gameplay system"]

It looks as though 2006 will be an exciting year for fans of the *Metal Gear* series. Not only will the New Year see the eagerly anticipated *Metal Gear Acid 2* hit these shores, but quite possibly an entirely new PSP *Metal Gear* title too.

That's because *Metal Gear Solid* producer Hideo Kojima has announced that another *Metal Gear* title is already in development for the PSP. And it won't be another *Metal Gear Acid* sequel, but rather a brand new title.

Kojima confirmed as much in a recent entry on his blog, adding that six senior members of Kojima Productions met this month to discuss the title. Among those present at the meeting were *Zone Of Enders* director Noriaki Okamura, and

Shinta Nojiri, who performed directing duties on *Metal Gear Acid 2*, and is set to direct and produce the new game.

However, before you get your hopes up about the imminent arrival of *Metal Gear Solid* it's worth noting that Kojima admitted that the game will offer a "completely new gameplay system" and that he's unsure how people will respond to the new direction.

Predictably, Kojima's comments have sparked a flurry of speculation, much of which suggests the new game may take the form of a digital comic.

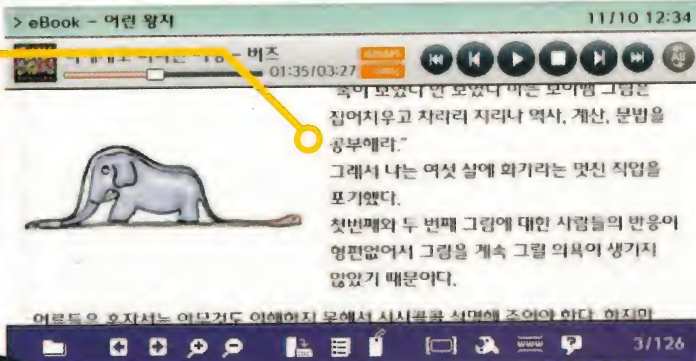
It transpires that Kojima lists the game as *Metal Gear Solid BD* on his blog - 'BD' is a common abbreviation of 'Bandes Dessinées', the French name for comics.

NEED TO KNOW

The PSP Content Viewer was unveiled at this year's G-Star convention, Seoul's answer to E3. The Content Viewer allows you to download specially formatted content onto a Memory Stick, enabling PSP users to read books and comics while on the go. It's expected that a future firmware upgrade will include the Content Viewer.

The Content Viewer will transform your PSP into a mobile library. Or alternatively, a book about elephants.

Not the usual flimsy pair of out-of-a-cereal-packet 3D specs for Mr Sony, oh no.



Trailer Trash

Forthcoming MGA2 to include 3D demo of MGS 4

If you failed to catch a glimpse of the stunning *Metal Gear Solid 4* trailer that Konami premiered at the Tokyo Game Show this year, then you've missed the most outrageously exciting demo of the year.

Featuring an aging, grizzled, and bizarrely moustachioed Snake, and showcasing the awesome power of the PlayStation3, Konami's forthcoming

blockbuster was the talk of Tokyo after its impressive three-minute showcase.

Thankfully, fans will be treated to a new look at the *MGS 4* trailer early next year since Konami has revealed the upcoming *Metal Gear Acid 2* will include the trailer directly on the UMD. By using a pair of 3D glasses included with the game, you'll be able

to take a peek at the next-gen *MGS* footage, but since 3D glasses have a nasty habit of turning

everything into a blurry purple mess, how much of a thrill that'll be remains to be seen.



Moreover, in a recent interview with Japan's Famitsu magazine, Kojima referred to a partnership with Frank Miller, the acclaimed graphic novelist responsible for *Sin City*, which he hoped would produce a digital comic version of *Metal Gear Solid*.

Intriguingly, Sony has registered 'PSPMagazines', 'PSPBooks' and 'PSPComics' as trademarks in Japan, and last month announced the PSP Content Viewer - a feature that will let you read books, comics and web clippings on the portable console.

Whether this amounts to a series of stunning coincidences or something more substantial remains to be seen, though it's unlikely Kojima will be able to keep a new *Metal Gear* title under wraps for long.

SURF'S UP

Sony site makes internet browsing with PSP easy as ABC



In case you'd forgotten, your PSP isn't just a state-of-the-art gaming system, but a deluxe media player and portable internet browser to boot.

Sadly, however, surfing the information super highway hasn't always been plain sailing, to mix one's maritime metaphors. The PSP's browser makes navigating certain sites next to impossible, while having to scroll left and right on some portal pages makes for clumsy and frustrating browsing.

Fortunately, Sony Online Entertainment has launched a new PSP-friendly site to make navigating the net that much

easier. Specifically designed with the PSP system's web browser in mind, Mobile.Station is a cinch to navigate thanks to a console-friendly user interface, and the site offers a decent variety of content.

Visitors to the site can browse for downloadable trailers, wallpapers, and even game add-ons, and the site also boasts an impressive number of links to other PSP-friendly sites.

As is often the case, the amount of content and game coverage is extremely limited at this time. But as the site expands, Mobile.Station is sure to become a handy base camp for internet explorers.



Talkman includes a handy USB microphone that plugs into the top of your PSP. Simply speak into the mic, choose your target language, and let Max do the rest.

HANDS ON

NOW YOU'RE TALKING MY LANGUAGE

Sony's Talkman hits Japan

Waiting in an airport departure lounge, or boarding the Eurostar perhaps, there's nothing quite like brandishing your shiny new PSP to convey the impression that you're a globetrotting urban sophisticate, comfortable with all the trappings of modern technology and yet effortlessly stylish too.

Nothing will ruin that image more, however, than the sound of you butchering the native language with your heavily anglicised, hopelessly incompetent grasp of the local lingo.

Thankfully, your resourceful handheld will soon be able to lend

you a hand here too, after Sony's *Talkman* software was released in Japan this month.

Helping bridge the language barrier between English, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese and Korean, *Talkman* is a translation software package that could make communicating by sheepishly pointing at your phrasebook a thing of the past.

Building on ScanSoft's speech recognition software, Sony's *Talkman* is a universal language interpreter and trainer made exclusively for use on the PSP. And though it's a bit of a stretch to call it a game, it does boast an intriguing selection of mini-games.

Though Talkman is currently only available on import from Japan, importers will be pleased to know that setting your own language translates all the menus into English.

If Max isn't sure what you're trying to say, he'll helpfully offer suggestions as to what you might be getting at. Like "Where can I find cheap fags and booze?"



Lost in translation

For Talkman's dodo, videogames are a no-no.

Though Max is by no means foolproof - he only understands basic phrases or sayings, and struggles with strong accents or dialects - *Talkman's* menu screen does feature a surprisingly detailed list of common situations and scenarios, making it easy to search for the exact expressions you're looking for.

These range from the mundane (meeting people, travelling by train, booking a hotel room) to the strangely exotic (at the beauty salon, skiing off-piste, golfing on the driving range) and would appear to suggest that Max boasts a surprisingly versatile vocabulary.

Sadly, however, when it comes to videogames

Max is a little lost for words. Online Importer Lik-Sang, who tested the *Talkman*, asked Max to translate the phrase "My little brother took my first-edition white Saturn for a dive when showering, can you advise on where I could get replacement parts?" and poor old Max came up with "Where can I find a florist?"

For reasons best known to the developer, *Talkman* is fronted by Max, a large blue dodo, who acts as your personal interpreter. Included with the software is a USB mic that attaches to the top of your PSP, and speaking a phrase to Max via the microphone sees your avian friend repeat the words back to you in the language of your choice.

Talkman is currently only available by import, and features just four languages, but Sony is rumoured to be working on a European version for French, German, Italian and Spanish. Retailing at a shade under £50 in Japan, *TalkMan* could see your PSP become as indispensable on holiday as your swimming trunks.

It could see your PSP become as indispensable on holiday as your swimming trunks

FIVE STAR

Each month, someone picks their five fave PSP games

Jon Clegg
Staff writer



BURNOUT LEGENDS
Don't listen to the naysayers - this is *Burnout* at its best. Except for *Revenge*.



VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR
I've been hooked on this since the Dreamcast port.



APE ACADEMY
Paper, scissors, stone. With monkeys? Sold.



NBA STREET SHOWDOWN
An absolute triumph of style over substance.



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5
I hate it, and yet I can't stop playing it.

NEED TO KNOW

Programmes transferred from a TiVo recorder to a portable system will carry a digital watermark to discourage piracy. This will ensure that transferred content can be traced back to its original source, and prevent a surge of dodgy UMDs hitting the streets at knockdown prices. Well that's a relief.



BREAKING NEWS

PSP GOES TV

The revolution will now be televised

Your PSP just became even more indispensable. Not content with simply offering the finest portable gaming experience known to man, the ability to browse the Internet at your leisure, and the chance to watch movies and listen to music, PSP owners in America will soon be able to tune into their favourite TV shows on the go.

TiVo, the US-based manufacturer of digital video recorders, announced a new feature this month that will let

TiVo owners transfer recorded television shows onto Sony's handheld console.

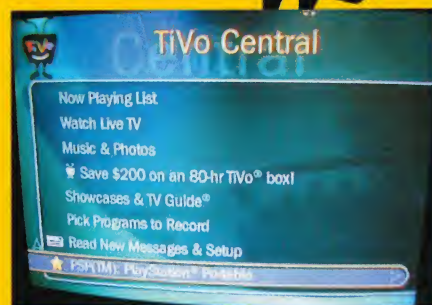
The service is an extension of the manufacturer's TiVoToGo package, which launched in February. New software released early in January will expand this package, allowing content to be transferred onto Sony's handheld, as well as Apple's video iPod.

The news will be welcomed by PSP owners who want to use their systems to watch films and videos, yet aren't willing to shell out for a

Time it right

TiVo announcement coincides with release of PSP Giga Pack

The timing of TiVo's announcement could hardly be better. With the release of Sony's PSP Giga Pack, which includes a 1Gb Memory Stick instead of the original 32Mb stick, the extra memory will be crucial if you hope to transfer anything more than the opening credits of a TV show to your PSP.



huge catalogue of UMD movies. And with similar technology due this side of the Atlantic later in the year, here at **GOPLAY** we're

eagerly anticipating the prospect of tuning into *Match Of The Day*, before firing up a game of *Pro Evo* to recreate the day's highlights.

COMIC GENIUS

Komikwerks launches downloadable comics for PSP

DESPITE ALL THE SHINY new things we bagged this Christmas, the best gift we received this month came when webcomic distributor Komikwerks announced that it has formatted six of its digital comic titles for the PSP.

The PSP Webcomic pack features a range

of titles from Stan Lee's Sunday Comics collection, including cult series Terranova, described by creator Rick Lazowski as "a boy-meets-girl-meets-giant-robot adventure of epic proportions".

The packs will be updated regularly, and can be downloaded for free from the Komikwerks site.



MUPPET OF THE MONTH

Which member of the team got stuck for the longest on a game? We mock the 'winner'...



DUNCAN SAYS: "I'm struggling to score in *Pro Evo 5*, but I've only just got my PSP so I'm still getting used to the layout. Once I'm more accustomed to the controls, I'll start scoring again."

WE SAY: "Pathetic. Your dry spell makes Peter Crouch look prolific, even though you play as England. Against China. On two star difficulty. You'd have trouble scoring on single's night in Magaluf."

TAKERU AMAZAWA'S TOKYO TITTLE TATTLE

TAKING A RIDE ON THE BRAIN TRAIN

More news from the land of the rising sun, courtesy of Takeru Amazawa

Lately, the one videogame market everyone wants to target is that of 'non-gamers'. They're the next big thing. Nintendo's DS, this year, has sold so many millions of units because of its utility titles, and now, one of the top ten games in Japan is a collection of board games. The PSP is getting the same games, albeit at a slower rate, and usually - and I say this as the columnist in a PSP magazine, of all things - they're not as good. The PSP's upcoming *Simple Series* board game collection really lacks polish. Who wants to play obscure Chinese card games? Why isn't there chess and checkers? Nintendo has chess and checkers, doesn't it.

By far the biggest runaway hit of the year is Nintendo's *Brain Training*. It's supposed to keep people - young and old - from going senile. It was made by a team of three professors at Tohoku University. Now Sega has published the game on the PSP,



Illustrations by David Semple

and it's dueling with the DS version in the game charts, sometimes above, sometimes below. It's fun to watch.

The most interesting game on the PSP by far, however, is Success' *Yawahada Eigo Juku*. It's not really a game, actually - it's a UMD video. It's controlled only through menus, like Japanese laserdisc adventures of years gone by. The story goes that these three cute Japanese swimsuit models are on a vacation overseas, and want to teach you helpful English. Sometimes they'll dance together, and mysteriously speak English to one another while doing so. Their

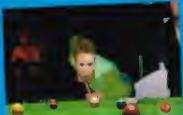
English is pronounced wrongly to a gorgeous degree. Misspelled subtitles light up like karaoke captions. One of the girls holds her hand to her ear and grins, as if she's listening. Then she gives you a big thumbs-up and says, "Good job!" The best part is that this doesn't even support the PSP microphone, introduced with the interpretation 'game' *Talkman*. The 'Yawahada' in the title means 'smooth-skinned,' and is a pun on *Yawaraka Atama Juku*, a hit brain-training game for DS. A 'juku' is a kind of school where they cram kids' heads for exams. 'Yawaraka' means 'soft' or 'gentle'. So this game is a rather fierce parody. Amazing, these times we live in - a new game genre isn't even a year out of the gate, and already we've got smug bastards making parodies.

Nevertheless, I am something of a changed man. I have decided, at long last, to study English.

[A new game genre isn't even a year out of the gate, and already we've got smug bastards making parodies]

PLAY AWAY

The best PSP mini-games to play... **...in a Mini**



Trickshot Challenge

1 Any game that lets us showboat is great, and there are few better than *World Snooker Challenge 2005's* Trickshot Challenge. Every trick, one after another, with no assistance. Fiendishly difficult, it's almost as irritating as Jim Davidson.



FIFA 06 Juggling

2 'Addictive' and 'FIFA' aren't words we commonly associate with each other, but the rhythm-based keepy-uppy challenge has us hooked. Turn the machine 90 degrees and juggle away. One million and one, one million and two...



Liberty City Survivor

3 *GTA's* back, and this time you're not the only badass on the streets. Exclusive to PSP, this deathmatch mode is an ultra violent, impossibly brutal brand of urban Darwinism, and it's a riot to play. Find five other players, and fight for your bragging rights.

MILE HIGH WI-FI

Airline offers in-flight PSPs

FOR MOST OF US, the prospect of a long haul flight is particularly grim. Enduring the tedium of an in-flight film we've invariably seen before, while having the back of our seat kicked by the irritating little monster sat behind us - it's no wonder we're forced to raid the drinks trolley at every opportunity.

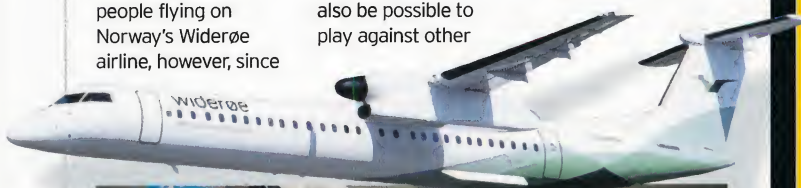
Not so the lucky people flying on Norway's Widerøe airline, however, since

the company announced this month that it will be offering its customers a complimentary PSP for the duration of their flight. And to think we're lucky if we receive a bag of peanuts and a free drink for our pains.

For a small fee, all passengers on flights that last longer than one hour can borrow a PSP, says the company, while it will also be possible to play against other

passengers with rented PSPs in-flight thanks to a handy Wi-Fi connection.

No word yet as to whether flight simulators will be permitted, but the prospect of enlivening long flights with a spot of *Liberty City Survivor* means we're seriously contemplating a sojourn to Scandinavia just to enjoy the privilege.

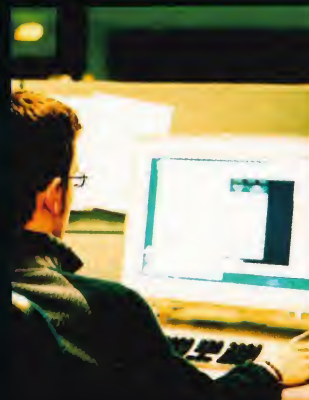


Some classic airline nosh. Mmm... Toblerone. Lovely.

BREAKING NEWS

RSS ON PSP

Yet another firmware upgrade released



Another week, another firmware update from Sony, as the corporate giant tries to keep one step ahead of the PSP hackers.

Update 2.60 was released this month, though the announcement was delivered without any of the fanfare that has accompanied previous upgrades.

There are, however, a few neat enhancements included with this firmware, most notably

compatibility with "copyright-protected video data provided by a content provider or other services" - in other words, opening the door to downloadable programming by cutting down on transfer time.

Of course, this latest update will be of particular interest to one set of people - the hacking community trying to get homebrew software working on the PSP.

Though successful attempts have been made to sidestep and

[It means another set of obstacles for the hackers to overcome]

compatibility with the WMA format. That's welcome news for Windows users, since it removes one of the steps involved in transferring music onto your PSP.

Other useful features include RSS support, Chinese language encoding in the Web browser, and

downgrade the 1.50 and 2.00 firmware updates, this announcement indicates a whole new set of obstacles for the hackers to overcome.

Still, chances are the hack will have been released in the time it's taken you to read this.

It's a cracker

Broken screens no longer mean broken dreams

Cracking news for clumsy gamers comes from PSPTree, the online games retailer, which has announced a PSP screen replacement service for UK customers.

If your PSP has suffered an unfortunate accident (when our latest attempt at a Franchise on *Madden* crashed, we very nearly inflicted such an 'accident' on the said expensive Sony handheld), the retailer can replace the screen with a brand new Sharp TFT screen.



Brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it?

The service, which guarantees repair within five working days, will fix all screen problems associated with the PSP, including dead pixels, cracked screen, and colour issues. Best of all, the

replacement screen is covered under a three month warranty. Although at £85 for a new screen, we'd suggest you still take a deep breath before your frustration gets the better of you.

OUR MAN ON THE CLAPHAM OMNIBUS

THERE'S A WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW...

A fleeting glance at the hairy underbelly of portable PlayStation-ing



Following on from last month's theme, and with another four week's build-up of paranoia that everybody and his dog covets my precious PSP as if it were their neighbour's ass (assuming they have a fit neighbour, obviously), I've been looking into the possibility of keeping the fricking thing at home and making it the centrepiece of my in-house entertainment system.

Now I know what you're thinking. You're thinking "It's portable for a reason, stupid." True enough, but that's a problem easily solved for you by the likes of Logic 3, Joytech and Radica, purveyors of all things peripheral to the world of videogaming. You've gotta love those guys, constantly beavering away to enable you to use your consoles in ways even the manufacturer never thought of. I've done some shopping around t'internet and for a comparatively modest outlay, I've got enough bolt-on, snap-in, slide-over, stretch-across accessories that my formerly slimline console is now a bulbous, uncoordinated mish-mash of scattergun R&D projects launched to grab the coattails of popular hype and ride piggyback all the way to the bank. I have hard cases that

double the size and weight of the console, soft cases, wallet cases, even a wibbly-wobbly scratch resister that makes your PSP feel like it's made from human skin.

That's not as scary as the pièce de résistance (French for resistant piece) which is the awesome speaker cradle that

a part of a privileged minority. Don't hate me for the silver spoon in my mouth.

Anyway I got the whole thing hooked up. I had to rearrange my living room slightly so the sofa's no more than three feet from the screen, but now I can watch UMDs to my heart's content in the

I'm one of the lucky ones in that I have an actual TV in my house. I don't wanna sound like I'm bragging, but...

enables you to watch your PSP at home like - get this - a regular telly. Woah! Hang on to your hats, folks. It's like everything has gone round in one big, crazy circle!

I'm one of the lucky ones in that I have an actual TV in my house. I don't wanna sound like I'm bragging, but I guess I'm just

comfort of my own home. What annoys me though is that sometimes I have to go out. The thing is, I love watching UMDs so much I don't want to stop, not ever, even for a minute. Now if only I could just take the player with me, imagine that!

GO FISHIN'

Thanks to the PSP's Game Sharing function, a new fishing game included in the portable release of *Breath Of Fire* can be transferred to a friend's system even if they don't have a copy of the game. The fishing mode will take in 18 different game locations, and is sure to have you hooked.



BREAKING NEWS

MAKE MINE A DOUBLE

Capcom announces Monster twin titles for PSP

Clearly still caught up in the festive spirit of giving, Capcom's European office announced two new games for PSP this month, both scheduled to hit the shelves early in the New Year.

And RPG fans have plenty to cheer about, with the news that

Breath Of Fire III will be the first instalment of the series to appear on a handheld console.

While the information we received about the game featured the usual guff about a following a hero "as he embarks on an epic quest to discover his ancestry and understand the dragon power that has awoken inside of him" - all of which means very little - fans can get excited about the prospect of visual improvements, since Capcom has promised graphical enhancements to take advantage of the PSP's considerable screen resolution.

Even more exciting, however, is the announcement of *Monster Hunter Freedom*, a PSP version of *Monster Hunter G*, which was released on PS2 this year only in Japan.

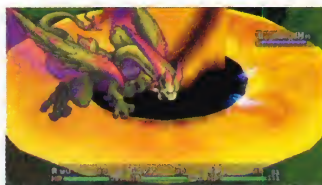
Expanding on the PS2 release, *Monster Hunter Freedom* adds new missions and features to the beast-slaying, weapon-building, food-cooking franchise, including an Ad Hoc mode with objectives such as defeating specific monsters and then building up your hunter by creating new and more powerful weapons.

With an enhanced village hub, house area, and farm, and a new

Animal Farm

Another addition to the PSP edition of *Monster Hunter* is The Farm, a small piece of land where you can acquire essential items without having to travel too far from the village. The Farm will also feature a collection of mini-games, boosting the impressive catalogue already available on the PSP.

Felyne Kitchen where players can train cats to cook for them, the portable version looks set for 'Monster' success come its March release date.



THE HOURS

WHAT'S BEEN EATING OUR LIVES... AND FOR HOW LONG



MILES

PURSUIT FORCE:

"At first it seems great, then it starts getting a bit samey, but you keep playing it nevertheless. I did feel a bit queasy after an hour on the 347 bus from Waterloo though."

3 hrs

CHRISTMAS BOOZAGE:

"30 games journals + seven separate PR expense accounts + one evening = very silly."

9 hrs



JON

MADDEN NFL 06:

"Randy Moss has got some outrageous skills in this edition. A sick 97-yard reverse sees off New England, and my Raiders are Superbowl-bound."

08 hrs

WINNING PUB QUIZ DOWN ME LOCAL:

"Alright, not really winning so much as coming third. But technically we did win a bottle of wine, so it felt like victory."

02 hrs



ANTHONY

WORLD SNOOKER CHALLENGE 2006:

"Yes, I know it's a bit sad, but I like the idea of beating Stephen Hendry with a big stick."

03 hrs

PLAYING POOL AGAINST NICK JONES:

"The editor of *PLAY*'s new, bright yellow Adidas trainers seem to give him total control over pool balls - he's currently unstoppable. What a cheat!"

3 mins



DUNCAN

GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES:

"Hours spent blowing up Roy Kimber, Luke Smith and Tom LeClerc (formerly part of team P2!) on the multiplayer. Team go>Play rules!"

04 hrs

TRYING TO GET BETTER AT PRO EVO 5:

"Playing a game that most people in the office have played since birth leaves me with some what of a dis-advantage!"

20 hrs



Pursuit Force

Cross retro arcade classic *Chase HQ* with *Burnout 2*'s Pursuit mode and the result is this frantically fast, fiendishly tricky game of catch me if you can. A blast to play, but ludicrously hard.



Everybody's Golf

A good walk spoiled? No chance. *Everybody's Golf* brings a dose of arcade action to the fairway. Bright cartoon visuals and ridiculous power shots make it instantly accessible and gratifying.



Virtua Tennis World Tour

A classic on arcade, and on Dreamcast, *Virtua Tennis* makes a predictably smooth transition to PSP. Deceptively easy, but tricky to master, this version includes Maria Sharapova. Result.



UK CHARTS

We've been keeping an eye on...

CHART POSITION	GAME NAME	WEEKS IN CHART	PUBLISHER	IN THREE SECONDS...
01	World Tour Soccer	(15)	SCEE	A surprisingly solid football game from the team behind <i>This Is Football</i> .
02	GTA: Liberty City Stories	(6)	Rockstar	<i>Liberty City Stories</i> is a typically epic outing from Rockstar.
03	Pro Evolution Soccer 5	(4)	Konami	The daddy of PSP footy games, but not quite all it might have been.
04	Pursuit Force	(4)	SCEE	Remember <i>Chase HQ</i> ? Judging by this, so does Sony.
05	Need For Speed Most Wanted	(New)	EA	This second <i>NFS</i> outing on PSP improves on the original. Just.
06	WRC: World Rally Championship	(4)	SCEE	Another barely adequate racer finds it's way on to your PSP.
07	FIFA 06	(9)	EA	We bet a World Cup edition will be announced by the time you read this.
08	Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire	(4)	EA	Something here about a boy wizard. Doubt it'll catch on.
09	Ridge Racer	(15)	SCEE	<i>Ridge Racer</i> celebrates its tenth birthday by powersliding on to PSP.
10	Star Wars: Battlefront II	(6)	Activision	Play as the Jedi in this superior <i>Star Wars</i> sequel.
11	WipEout: Pure	(14)	SCEE	Sizzling speed and a kaleidoscope of lurid colours. Starting to feel queasy.
12	Everybody's Golf	(12)	SCEE	Insanely addictive cartoon golf game boasting up to 50 players online.
13	Lumines	(15)	Ubisoft	<i>Lumines</i> is an anagram of un-smile but it'll have you grinning like a fool.
14	Burnout Legends	(13)	EA	A Best Of... <i>Burnout</i> compilation featuring high-octane thrills.
15	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06	(10)	EA	<i>Tiger</i> 's serious approach sees him lagging behind Sony's effort.
16	Midnight Club 3: Dub Edition	(15)	Rockstar	Take to the streets of urban America in your pimped-out ride.
17	SSX On Tour	(7)	EA	More white stuff here than at a stockbrokers' Christmas party.
18	TOCA Race Driver 2	(15)	Codemasters	Another entry, another mediocre racer. <i>TOCA</i> features 12-player WiFi.
19	Metal Gear Acid	(15)	Konami	Kojima's been watching too much <i>Late Night Poker</i> .
20	Virtua Tennis World Tour	(15)	SEGA	Despite moving down the rankings faster than Tim Henman, this is ace.



World Tour Soccer

Seeing *World Tour Soccer* ahead of *Pro Evo 5* and *FIFA* in the charts is a bit like seeing Sunderland at the top of the Premiership. To say we're surprised would be something of an understatement.



Ridge Racer

For the third time, a PlayStation console debuts with a *Ridge Racer* title in its launch line-up, and for the third time the result is an unqualified success. 54 cars and 24 tracks mean another tasty slice of drift-racing perfection.



SSX On Tour

A tour de force from EA, this latest release of the classic franchise takes all the good stuff from the previous version and ratchets it up to ten. Big air, monster hair, and the chance to create your own snowboarder too. Sold.

PSP KEEPS LOW PROFILE AT GAME

Disappointing PSP presence at The Games And Music Experience

BILLED AS A MINI-E3, the much-hyped Games And Music Experience (GAME) took place in San Francisco this month and despite attracting significant crowds, the PSP managed to remain disappointingly incognito.

Throughout the three-day event, sponsored by GameSpot, Sony's handheld took pride of place on a

stand in the Games On The Go section, where a variety of titles were displayed and gamers were invited to get their hands on the portable platform via the numerous Sony pods.

The vast majority of the PSP titles on show, however, had already been on the market for several months, and there were few details of upcoming releases and

even fewer glimpses of future titles.

The titles slated for a 2006 release that were displayed at the show included SOE's *Field Commander*, *Untold Legends: The Warrior's Code*, and also Namco's *Bounty Hounds*.

But catching more than a glimpse of these upcoming attractions proved

particularly tricky, since the majority of visitors crowded around the handful of pods running these games.

Sadly, this was a recurrent theme for GAME, with numerous attendees expressing disappointment at the fact that far too many of the games displayed for every platform were titles readily available in game stores.



RELEASE LIST

THE HANDHELD HAREM IS BURSTING AT THE SEAMS. DELIGHT AWAITS



OUT NEXT MONTH FEBRUARY

BREATH OF FIRE III
Capcom

DEAD TO RIGHTS: RECKONING
EA

KEY OF HEAVEN
SCEE

LEMMINGS
SCEE

MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES
Midway

PAC-MAN WORLD 3
Outsource Media

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA MAX
Capcom

TALKMAN
SCEE

OUT THIS MONTH JANUARY

Konami's legendary soccer game debuts, and Paperboy's back on his round

FRIDAY 23 DECEMBER

STAY CLEAR

MADDEN NFL 06 EA (£35)

A decent enough conversion of everyone's favourite NFL sim, though reported to suffer bugs in the franchise mode.



PUZZLE BOBBLE Rising Star (£35)

Bubble Bobble is an all-time classic, with one of the most insanely irritating and annoyingly catchy theme tunes ever devised. Buy this, and curse the evil musical genius responsible.

FRIDAY 6 JANUARY

TALES OF ETERNIA Ubisoft (£35)

The latest chapter in the long running *Tales* series of RPGs, *Eternia* looks

absolutely stunning on the PSP's widescreen.

THE SIMS 2 EA (£35)

You'll have their lives in the palm of your hand. Literally. Cue maniacal laugh. How cool is that?

FRIDAY 13 JANUARY

PINBALL CLASSICS: THE GOTTlieb COLLECTION

Play It (£30)

It's pinball! It's on the PSP! It's a decades-old game - so why would we want to play it on our shiny new Sony portable?

MUST BUY

THE CON SCEE (£35)

Also known as *Fighting Spirits*, Sony provides an interesting take on the 3D brawler by allowing you to bet on all your fights. So even if you're rubbish, you can still end up winning.



WORLD POKER TOUR

2k Sports (£35)

Sure, a pack of playing cards would be cheaper at £1.50. But then you'd have to worry about making friends to play with.

SPACE INVADERS EVOLUTION

Atari (£35)

Includes a sublime version of the retro classic, as well as a diabolical new version that is utterly dire.

PQ: PRACTICAL INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

D3Publisher (£30)

Practical Intelligence Quotient? What the hell is that? Sounds like some sort of new-fangled exam for thickos.

SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR SCEE (£35)

Originally entitled *Logan's Shadow*, *Dark Mirror* sees the return of Gabe Logan and *Syphon Filter*'s cast of familiar characters, including Lian Xing and the other trusty agents. Boasting new character abilities and inventive new team management

aspects, this sequel to *Omega Strain* features impressive ad-hoc and online multiplayer modes.

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY

PUYO POP FEVER SEGA (£35)

2D craziness from Sonic Team with the jiggly-wiggly *Puyo Puyo* beans jiggling and wiggling in a collection of gaudy colours.

RECOMMEND

INFECTED Majesco (£35)

Innovative shooter with outstanding online multiplayer mode, allowing you to spread a virtual virus to other PSPs all over the world. Shame the members of Slipknot have managed to slip in as characters though.



All information correct at time of going to press. Please be aware that release dates and prices are subject to change.



LAWKS! THERE'S MORE! 06

MARCH

CAPCOM CLASSICS
COLLECTION REMIXED

Capcom

FOOTBALL MANAGER 06

SEGA

FIFA STREET 2

EA

MEGA MAN MAVERICK
HUNTER X

Capcom

MEGA MAN POWERED UP

Capcom

MONSTER HUNTER
FREEDOM

Capcom

MORTAL KOMBAT
DECEPTION

Midway

SOCOM: U.S. NAVY
SEALS FIRETEAM
BRAVO

SCEE

APRIL

FIELD COMMANDER

Ubisoft

GENERATION OF
CHAOS

Nippon Ichi

GRAN TURISMO 4

MOBILE

SCEE

MLB '06: THE SHOW

SCEE

SPLINTER CELL

Ubisoft

UNTOLD LEGENDS:
THE WARRIOR'S CODE

Ubisoft

TBA

DAXTER

SCEE

FROM RUSSIA WITH
LOVE

EA

ME & MY
KATAMARI

EA

METAL
GEAR
ACID 2

Konami

MOTO GP

THQ

MOTORSTORM

SCEE

MX VS ATV
UNLEASHED

THQ

NEED FOR SPEED
MOST WANTED 5-1-0

EA

THE CHRONICLES OF
NARNIA

Buena Vista Games

THE GODFATHER

EA

YS: THE ARK OF
NAPISHTIM

Konami

Out on import

The best and the latest PSP releases from around the world

METAL GEAR ACID 2

Konami (£30)

Kojima has reshuffled the deck for this *Metal Gear Acid* sequel, with another bout of card-based strategising that promises faster gameplay and a smoother interface. Also included is a *MGS 4* trailer, with 3D viewing option, meaning you can catch a glimpse of an elderly Snake sporting an impressive 'tache.

SAMURAI WARRIORS:
STATE OF WAR

Koei (£35)

This *Dynasty Warriors* offshoot, known as *Geki-Sengoku Musou* in Japan, created quite a buzz when it hit the shelves in Tokyo earlier this month. But given that the Japanese show an apparently insatiable appetite for all things *Dynasty Warriors*, that might not be quite the ringing endorsement you were hoping for.

PSP Pirates

Ahoy cap'n! There's gold in them there hills! PSP bargains we've been keeping our eye (the one without the eye patch, that is) on this month.

Capcom announced a PAL version of *Monster Hunter Portable*, and has scheduled it for a March release. But Play-Asia is already hawking the Japanese version for \$39.99.

MyMemory.co.uk, a digital camera specialist, has somehow managed to get a haul of PSP goodies, and is flogging them at knockdown prices. *Metal Gear Acid* can be yours for £17.99, while *FIFA 06* and *NFL Street 2* cost £24.99 each. Hurry before it realises its meant to be selling cameras.

Play-Asia.com appear to have lost its mind, and is selling *Wipeout Pure* and *Guilty Gear XX Reload* for a measly \$19.90 each. That's under a tenner. Two lovely PSP games for an Ayrton! Get 'em while they're hot.

Two lovely PSP games for an Ayrton! Get 'em while they're hot



2006 is going to be an exciting year, in terms of PSP releases. Wow, look at Marlon Brando!



PSP POST

WRITE TO US. WORDS ARE **YOUR** POWER...

CONTACT US



EMAIL:

goplay@paragon.co.uk



POST: go>PLAY,

Highbury Entertainment,
Paragon House,
St Peter's Road,
Bournemouth,
Dorset, BH1 2JS

Everyone still seems to be coming to terms with just what an awesome doohickey the **PSP** actually is. More importantly though by the time you read this you'll be all chubbed out on Christmas turkey so try not to get greasy fingers all over the pages, eh.

DEAR SANTA

Love the mag. I haven't got a PSP yet, but I know that my parents are getting me one for Christmas. Anyway, what I really want to know is what games you reckon I should buy first. They've said I can have two.

Jamie Dyer, Kidderminster

Your parents rock! As for what to get, it all kind of depends on what you like playing. *Wipeout Pure*, *Pursuit Force*, *Virtua Tennis World Tour*, *Everybody's Golf*, *Metal Gear Acid*. You can't go



O This looks like a screenshot of *Pursuit Force*, but it's actually a photo of our very own Jon Clegg, demonstrating his taxi-catching technique.

wrong with any two from that little lot. Then there's *Liberty City Stories*, but you're too young for that, right? Actually, just realised this issue won't be on sale until after xmas anyway which makes this all rather redundant. Um, next...

MANAGEMENTAL

I've been told that *Championship Manager* is coming out on PSP in December. However, I also read that *Football Manager* is coming out as well. Which one should I go for? *Football Manager* on the PC was much better than *Champ Man*, but it won't be out on the PSP until next year. Should I just buy *Championship Manager* or should I wait until next year for *Football Manager*?

Terry Martin, Portsmouth

Champ Manager is pretty good. Check out the review elsewhere

Arsenal		Chelsea	
1. I. Lehmann	0 1	P. Cook	0 0
2. S. Larsson	1 0	P. Parreira	0 0
3. G. Clichy (79)	1 0	W. Bolea	7 0
4. A. Cole	1 0	M. S. Silva	0 0
5. S. Campbell	1 0	R. Carvalho (87)	0 0
6. K. Eto'o	0 0	C. M. Mendes	1 0
7. M. Pires (57)	0 0	A. B. Mendes	1 0
8. P. Vidić (4)	0 0	F. L. L. Mendes	1 0
9. B. Barry	1 0	M. Mendes	0 0
10. K. T. T. T.	0 0	M. Mendes	0 0
11. M. van Persie (57)	1 0	M. Mendes	0 0

O The sexiest spreadsheet ever returns. This time on PSP!

this issue for the full gen. It does have a few flaws though. Whether you want to wait and see how *FM* turns out depends on how desperately you want a football management game.

BURNED OUT

Hi guys! I've just finished reading your first issue and have to say 'Well done'. Except for one thing! Why did *Burnout Legends* only get 71 per cent? I've been playing it for the last few days and I think it's excellent. It's not quite as good as

[The PSP can do everything the PlayStation can and more, and all of this wherever you are]

F.A.Q.

Mail to: goplay@paragon.co.uk

Putting out the fires of those burning PSP questions

> Is there any way that I can burn my own PSP discs, like I can burn CDs? I know you can watch movies from the Memory Stick, but I've got a collection of home movies that I'd like to keep on a more permanent format, to watch on my PSP. If it's not possible, do you know if Sony has any plans to make it so.

Darren LeWarne, email UMD discs are read-only, so the only way that you can watch your home movies is via the Memory

Stick. At the moment, only Sony and those licensed by Sony are able to write UMDs. There are aren't any plans to make the technology more widely available and at the moment it doesn't seem likely that it will.

> Just got my PSP and I'm really enjoying it. However, I'm a little concerned about the battery life. Is there any way that I can extend it? **Emma Anderson**, Bristol

There's a couple of ways you can go about getting more out of your battery. Firstly, you can change the screen brightness. If you're in a brightly lit area, you probably don't need the screen to be at its full brightness. Also, the louder you have the sound, the more power the speakers will draw from the battery. Using headphones should save you quite a bit of power. Alternatively, you could buy another a battery - either an

STAR LETTER

NICE FIRST ISSUE, guys. Good to see a mag devoted to the PSP which is such an amazing technological achievement it doesn't deserve to be tucked away in the arse-end of the existing PlayStation magazines. How Sony has managed to get such graphical quality into such a tiny unit, I just don't know. Well, if I did I probably wouldn't work in ASDA, right? You get the point though. It

just seems to me that at the moment the PSP is perceived by a lot of people to be an extension of the PlayStation, but for me it deserves to stand on its own. It can do everything the PlayStation can and more, and all of this wherever you are in the world. The battery life isn't great but I carry a couple of fully charged spares just in case. In fact, my only moan is the omission of a second

analogue nub which is madness to me. Dual analogue is the only way to play FPSs, for example. I'm sure there's a very good technical reason why a right thumb nub wasn't included but it just seems a bit crazy to me.

Anyway, the measure of the machine is that since I bought it (two weeks ago) I've been playing *WipEout Pure*, *Liberty City Stories* and *Lumines* so much that I haven't even turned on my Xbox or PS2. Everyone's going totally crazy for Xbox 360 at the moment, but for me PSP is so much more exciting and innovative. Why do I need *Project Gotham* with shinier cars when I carry the future in my pocket?

Casey James, Telford

You're right, of course. That's why we're here, all up in the PSP love. Never again will you have to go on holiday to 'get away from it all', because now you can take it all with you. Sweet!



Revenge, but it's definitely worth at least 90 per cent. Sort it out!

Leigh Spriggs, Hampshire

PS - Aaron Asadi - is he or isn't he?

Well that's your opinion and you're entitled to it. It's still got



O *Burnout Legends* wasn't perhaps as good as it should have been.

crap loading times though, and cars appearing right in front of you is just plain annoying. If you can overlook the basic problems, it's a decent game, but by no means great.

TOUCHED UP

Although I love my PlayStation2 and think my PSP is absolutely adorable, I think I'm being pulled closer and closer to the dark side (NINTENDO!). One of my friends has a Nintendo DS and *Nintendogs*. I've had a go on it and think it's great; the touch screen is awesome. Will the PSP ever have a touch screen? Also, I've



identical one, which you can carry as a spare, or one with an increased capacity. There are many unofficial battery packs on the market that can drastically improve your PSP's battery life. However, they tend to be bulky and you should be prepared to sacrifice the PSP's slimline looks for extra play time.

► I keep hearing about Wi-Fi and how you can play PSP games online, but I'm not sure how it

works. Where can I find a 'Hotspot' and will I have to pay to use it?

Duncan Fogarty, email

Wi-Fi does indeed enable you to go online with your PSP and thus play games against people anywhere in the world. Hotspots can be found in a variety of different places including Starbucks, some McDonalds, airports and also some internet cafes. In some cases, Wi-Fi is supplied free of charge, but others do require you to pay a fee.

Of course, if you have a wireless broadband set-up at home, you can always use that to play online to your hearts content.

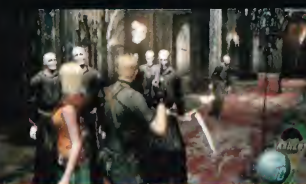
► What's with all the different Memory Stick types? I don't see why I'd want a Pro Duo rather than a Duo. I have a few regular Memory Sticks from an old digital camera. Can use those?

Curtis Long, Motherwell

The difference between the

HOT TOPIC

What's on everyone's brains this month?



What game or franchise would you most like to see converted to the PSP?

It would be wicked to see all the *Resident Evil* games come out. Maybe do like a boxed set or something. Also *Resident Evil O* which only came out on the GameCube, so at last non-GameCube owners would have a chance to play it.

Alex S, Sheffield

Devil May Cry should definitely be remade. It's one of the best action games around and Dante is the coolest character ever. I'd love to see him on PSP.

Harry, Dundee

The main problem of the PSP at the moment is that there are far too many remakes and conversions of other games. What it really needs is some original games and new franchises otherwise a lot of people will wonder what's the point in buying one once the novelty of amazing handheld graphics wears off.

Paul Beam, Norwich

There are loads of great games that it would be cool to play again on the PSP but that's the problem. I'd rather play new games for the first time than revisit things I finished years ago. The focus should be on making new games that no-one's seen before.

Phil, via email

I can't wait for *Football Manager* which but that doesn't really count cos we know it's already coming out. A version of *Tekken* would be good. And some decent FPSs like *Medal Of Honor* and that. To be honest I still haven't quite come to terms with the fact I can have such amazing games on the go!

Toby, Poole



seen an advert for the Revolution and that looks pretty cool as well. I know the PlayStation3 is going to ROCK, but does it have a motion sensor controller thing? Please help me, before I turn into an Evil Mario Lover!

Cheryl Lawson, Bordon

DS offers an entirely different gaming experience. What it does, it does very well, but can you imagine a DS version of *WipeOut Pure*? Us neither. As for *Nintendogs*, well, virtual pets are always fun at first, but where's the lastability. PSP is the future. End of.

OI OI!

GIVE ME A FREE PSP OR ME AND ME BRUV' WILL DO YOU OVER!

Phil Mitchel, email

Yeah? Tell him to bring it.

BIG UP SONY

After waiting for what seemed like an eternity plus four, I've finally got my hands on a PSP. I also bought *Burnout Legends*, *Virtua Tennis*, *GTA: Liberty City Stories* and a couple of UMD movies. All I can say is 'Wow!' It's one of the most amazing things



O *Virtua Tennis* has been great on every format it's graced. Now it's on the PSP and it's better than ever. It truly is a wonderful world.



O The very latest in Extreme Cooking is demonstrated in *GTA*.

I've seen in a long time. The screen is sharp, the sound is great and it feels perfect in my hands. The future of gaming looks bright (imagine how great the PSP2 will be!) and I for one would like to propose a toast to Sony for creating such a wonderful device. Not only does it play games, it plays films and music. It's a portable multimedia centre of the highest order. Well done Sony!

Jon Moran-Smith, Brighton

We couldn't agree more. Raise your glasses, ladies and gentlemen, to Sony, the company that gave the world the PSOne, PS2 and now the PSP. Thank you. Thank you very much.



O You can never have enough screenshots of *Virtua Tennis*.

Next month: we want to know whether you found it difficult getting your hands on a PSP...

» Memory Stick Duo and Pro Duo is that the latter reads faster. Whether that's worth the extra pennies is up to you. As for your old Memory Sticks, the immediate problem is the physical size. Regular Sticks are larger than the Duo variety and won't fit in the slot. Adaptors are available on the net, which let you use old Sticks, but they're quite large and therefore at odds with the entire concept of

the PSP. Success with these adaptors also seems to be rather hit and miss.

» Is there any way that I can use my PSP to send text messages and make phone calls?

Andrew Johnson, email

At present there's no way to make phone calls from a PSP. However, if someone produced a compatible VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) client it would

be possible to make calls via the PSP's Wi-Fi. This probably won't happen though, because it would be in direct competition with the Sony Ericsson brand. Anyway, why would anyone want to make calls on a PSP, when they've got a mobile phone already? As for text messages, you could visit a website which allows you to send texts, but it would be easier and cheaper to use your mobile.

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Printed by Southernprint (Web Offset) Ltd,
17-21 Factory Road, Upton Industrial Estate,
Poole BH16 5SN

Distributed by Seymour Ltd, 1st Floor,
86 Newman Street, London W1P 3LD
Tel: 020 7396 8000

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Issue 39, on sale 1 December

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THE 10 PSP GAMES YOU MUST OWN

See that little black slab you got for Christmas? That, friends, is the magical portal to a world of interactive fun otherwise known as a PSP. Now you need something to play on it, right? Right!



GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

PUBLISHER: ROCKSTAR
GO>PLAY RATED: 97%

WHY YOU WANT IT:

It upsets Daily Mail readers, which is reason enough in itself. It also backs up controversial content with the most enthralling, free and liberating game on the PSP.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

GTA is just about the sweetest hunk of code ever to be loaded into a videogames console anywhere, ever.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Carjacking and racketeering will earn you an expenses-paid stay at her majesty's pleasure.



EVERYBODY'S GOLF

PUBLISHER: SCEE
GO>PLAY RATED: 91%

WHY YOU WANT IT:

You loved it on PS2, it's not as poe-faced as *Tiger Woods* and it looks soooooo cute!



WHY YOU NEED IT:

Behind the fluffy visuals is an addictive and skilful game that constantly rewards perseverance with that elusive commodity that is deep-rooted self-satisfaction.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Golf clubs are bloody expensive, wandering around fields in the rain is unpleasant and golfers develop a taste for unnecessary trousers.

WIPEOUT PURE

PUBLISHER: SCEE
GO>PLAY RATED: 88%

WHY YOU WANT IT:

It's the game to wow your mates and demonstrate in an instant the awesome graphical power of the PSP.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

This is the ultimate seat-of-your-pants white-knuckle ride and a truer test of D-pad dexterity you'll be hard-pushed to find.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Ragging it around Bournemouth's famous Westover circuit in a pimped out Allegro is, well, rubbish.



VIRTUA TENNIS

PUBLISHER: SEGA
GO>PLAY RATED: 90%

WHY YOU WANT IT:

Maria Sharapova's in it.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

A silky smooth tennis simulation, which also happens to be an ideal sport for handhelds since it's broken down into nice, easy, bite-sized chunks.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Be absolute ass at real tennis and do yourself a nasty trying to jump the net for a dare.



WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW

PUBLISHER: THQ
GO>PLAY RATED: 90%

WHY YOU WANT IT:

It's identical to the PS2 version, which is awesome. The real life spectacle is as limp as a flaccid limpet, but here they really do hit each other. Hard. A lot.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

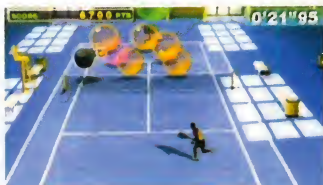
It bagged 90 per cent in this here issue. What



Not content with giving you a great one-player game, Rockstar also threw in some pretty nifty multiplayer modes too.



Once again the World Step Ladder-Climbing Championship was won by Graham Arbuckle, a painter decorator from Suffolk.



If we had our way, real tennis would actually look like this.



Everybody's Golf is cute and a lot more fun than other golf games.



"Knees up muvver braaan. Knees up muvver braaan. Knees up, knees up, don't get the breeze up. Knees up muvverrrrr braaaaaaaan!" Cindy loved the classics.



This is the ultimate seat-of-your-pants white-knuckle ride and a truer test of D-pad dexterity you'll be hard-pushed to find

more do you need? An invitation from Ric Flair?
WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:
Six months in traction.

ARCHER MCLEAN'S MERCURY

PUBLISHER: ATARI
GO>PLAY RATED: 82%



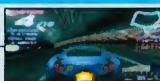
WHY YOU WANT IT:
Super addictive formless blob action that'll keep you glopping and plooping for hours.

WHAT YOU NEED IT:
You just do, okay!

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:
Real mercury is poisonous, the planet Mercury is too far to visit and Freddie Mercury is dead.

RIDGE RACER

PUBLISHER: SCE
GO>PLAY RATED: 92%



WHY YOU WANT IT:
It's classic Ridge Racer with the unique drifting system that ensures it remains as fun today as it

was ten years ago. No, really.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

All racing games are concerned with these days is being shiny and mod-able. When do we actually get to race, dagnammit!?!?

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Need For Speed Most Wanted (dull), Need For Speed Underground (dull), Midnight Club Dub Edition (horrible loading times).

THE SIMS 2

PUBLISHER: EA
GO>PLAY RATED: 86%



WHY YOU WANT IT:
It's the best selling PC game of all time for a reason - it's blimmin amazing!

WHY YOU NEED IT:

Because real life is pretty boring most of the time.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Get up, go to work, go out, meet friends. Who needs that kind of botheration?

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS

GO>PLAY RATED: 80%



WHY YOU WANT IT:

It's the most engrossingly stat-tastic spreadsheet-masquerading-as-a-videogame you'll ever play.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

Because whoever manages your team is no doubt doing a rubbish job and deep inside, you generally believe you could do better given the chance.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Wait for Football Manager.

LUMINES

PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
GO>PLAY RATED: 88%



WHY YOU WANT IT:

It looks swish.

WHY YOU NEED IT:

It's a camp futuristic musical that's also a puzzler and it has a dancing dog, and the Frag Dolls like it.

WHAT YOU'LL DO WITHOUT IT:

Wonder what the hell all the fuss is about.



Wipeout just gets better and better. Is this what the Renault Clio 1.2 Panache will look like in 2097?



Mercury can be found in old thermometers, but nowadays people usually fill them with alcohol, which is much safer and tastes better with tonic water.

I AM THE GAME, YOU WANNA PLAY ME?

2005 was just a **warm-up**. Next year is going to be the **golden age** of portable gaming

With the next generation of home consoles still struggling into being, 2006 is going to be the year of the PSP. Developers have had the time needed to get to grips with the console's throbbing power and as will be demonstrated to you over the next few pages, the result is the best looking, most diverse, line-up ever seen for a portable. Of course, developers couldn't keep to a release date if the well-being of their John Thomases depended on it but, so a few of these may well be delayed, but if you can't find something of interest in this lot you're either lying, dead or you hate freedom/videogames.





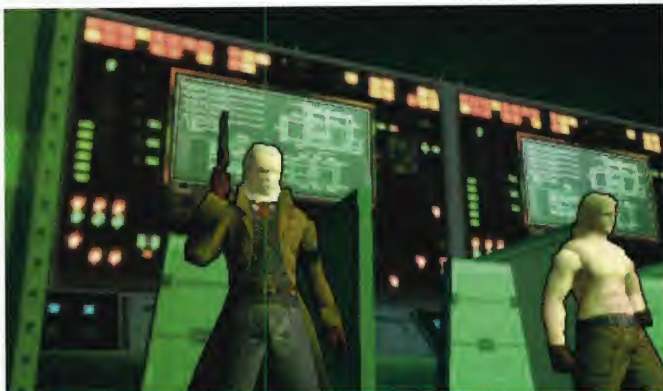
Metal Gear Acid 2

PUBLISHER: Konami **DEVELOPER:** Kojima Productions

THE WHAT: More card battling nonsense in the sequel to the love-it-or-hate-it original, now with even more stylised anime graphics and faster gameplay. The camera has also been sorted out this time round so that it's actually on your side, and for those that didn't think the idea of playing *Metal Gear* via a collectible card game was weird enough there's the new Solid Eye peripheral. The new widget clips onto the front of your PSP, creating a 3D effect and in the process making your console look like a crap Eighties ViewMaster camera. Still, the effect is pretty impressive and you don't have to use it if you don't want.

THE WHY: It's a new *Metal Gear* game. Plus it's quicker and easier to play than before.

THE WHEN: March 2006.



O *Metal Gear Acid 2* comes with the Solid Eye peripheral, which may sound like some kind of disease, but is actually quite cool.

Tales Of Eternia

PUBLISHER: Ubisoft **DEVELOPER:** Namco

THE WHAT: There's a ton of RPGs coming out on PSP next year (*Breath Of Fire III*, *Landstalker*, *The Legend Of Heroes: A Tear Of Vermillion*, *Ys: The Ark Of Napishtim*, *Ore No Dungeon: Desire And Adventurous Spirit*, to name but a few), although as ever in the UK, it's a bit of a mug's game trying to predict which ones will make it over the white cliffs of Dover. *Tales Of Eternia* is a definite and basically a port of the PSone game (known as *Tales Of Destiny II* in the US) featuring the usual spiky-haired heroes and end of the world calamity. It always was an above RPG, though, and with tons of spoken dialogue and very little loading, it's an enticing glimpse of things to come.

THE WHY: The vanguard of the portable role-playing invasion.

THE WHEN: Spring 2006.



O *Tales Of Eternia* is one of many, many RPGs on their way to the PSP, but one that we're genuinely looking forward to.



O We're genuinely excited about the release of *Football Manager*.



O Man United are, of course, here for all the footie fans in Far East Asia.

Football Manager 2006

PUBLISHER: Sega **DEVELOPER:** Sports Interactive

THE WHAT: A few years ago, it would've been *Championship Manager* everyone was getting excited about in the football management world, but that's been and gone on the PSP leaving narry a ripple in its wake. That's because the original developer, Sports Interactive, has long since left home and set up shop with new/old franchise *Football Manager*. The PSP version will be necessarily cut down from the PC version to ensure it can be played in bit-sized chunks, but it still promises to be the most in-depth portable management game ever. Weirdly, the ultra basic 2D match display is being devolved back to the old text commentary system, but Sports Interactive does promise it's doing this from the ground up just for the PSP, so we'll trust it to do so.

THE WHY: The best footy management game ever goes portable.

THE WHEN: Spring 2006.

2006 IS GOING TO BE THE YEAR OF THE PSP



O We dream of having our own intelligent robot buddy, but until science catches up with us, we've got *Tokobot*, which is no bad thing.

Tokobot

PUBLISHER: Tecmo **DEVELOPER:** Tecmo

THE WHAT: The first PSP game from the fabled Team Ninja studio isn't quite what you'd expect - not least because it doesn't feature any ninja. Instead, you're put in charge of a squad of cute little robots who you can order into various formations around you - the most basic being just lined up behind you so you can fling them at bad guys. Other formations let them bust out with a windmill attack or team up or combine into a giant gestalt robo. Your plastic pals can also help with jumps and puzzle solving, making for a pleasingly unique experience of which the only obvious flaw at the moment is slightly fiddly controls.

THE WHY: Tecmo's first PSP game and a clever mix of puzzles, action and robot love.

THE WHEN: TBA (already out in USA).

Loco Roco

PUBLISHER: Sony **DEVELOPER:** Sony Japan

THE WHAT: The surprise hit of the Tokyo Game Show, you control a little orange blob whose only desire in life is to eat. Whether this is to compensate for an unhappy break-up in his love life or because he's getting ready for a role in *Raging Bull 2* isn't clear. The main controls are the shoulder buttons, which rotate the whole level around to get young master blobby rolling on his way, but the catch is the more he eats the bigger he gets and the harder it is to move him. The other complication is the ability to split up into lots of little blobs to navigate narrow crevices and float on air currents, which may all sound a bit twee and simplistic but is actually more addictive than coke (cola).

THE WHY: The sleeper hit of the year (although which year, at this point, is not clear).

THE WHEN: TBA.



Using a process of scientific deduction combined with our gut reaction, we believe the above screenshot is from *Loco Roco*.

Daxter

PUBLISHER: Sony **DEVELOPER:** Ready at Dawn

THE WHAT: Jak's irritating ferretty pal is getting his first ever solo outing in a tale set between *Jak & Daxter* and *Jak II: Renegade*. For reasons unlikely to result in a Booker Award winning novelisation, Jak spends this time as an exterminator, armed with a fly swatter and some spray. The spray, in particular, can be used in a variety of ways - from hovering over gaps to converting to an impromptu flameflower - while Jak himself has the new ability to climb up walls. As solid as the platforming sections are, it's the graphics that impress the most, being possibly the best yet on the PSP and even extending to real virtual fur for Daxter.

THE WHY: Top of the line graphics and classic *Jak & Daxter* gameplay.

THE WHEN: Spring 2006.



Me & My Katamari fulfils our dream of having fun when tidying up our office. Sadly, this will never happen in real life.

Me & My Katamari

PUBLISHER: EA **DEVELOPER:** Namco

THE WHAT: The King Of All Cosmos is taking a holiday on an island paradise when a bunch of recently homeless animals ask him to make them some new islands to live on. Before you can say "Huh?" the Prince is back in action rolling up everything in his path to make the critters some new homes. The game looks nearly identical to the PS2 version as you push a ball around the levels rolling up first small items like paper clips and dice until it gets bigger and bigger and you end up rolling up skyscrapers and mountains. It's stupid, it's addictive and hopefully the soundtrack will be as good as the last two. The only concern is that without two analogue controllers you have to use the D-pad and face buttons, which doesn't feel quite the same.

THE WHY: It sounds stupid, it looks stupid, it is marvellous.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in Japan).



Determined not to be outdone by his mate, Jak, Mr Daxter has finally got his own game. And we applaud him for it. Well done!

The Rumour Mill

THERE'S ONLY ONE thing better than the anticipation of a new game (even one you know is still months away) and that's scurrilous gossip about titles that may not even exist at all. The following, though, have certainly been hinted at, but please don't blame us if they take a while to happen.

RESIDENT EVIL

A *Resi* game for the PSP has been rumoured for ages but the latest suggestion is that it'll be a variation of the online enabled *Outbreak*,

which is a shame because it's not very good.

DEVIL MAY CRY

This seems to have taken the opposite route of most rumours, changing from dead cert to nebulous rumour. We'd still bet on it turning up sooner or later though.

GTA: VICE CITY STORIES

Actually, Rockstar has confirmed that another *Grand Theft Auto* is on its way, but it hasn't said what it

is. A revisit of the PS2's second title seems a good guess.

DAVID JAFFE PROJECT

The guy behind the PS2's *God Of War* has confirmed he's planning a game for the PSP. Whether it'll feature Kratos is anyone's guess (except him; presumably he knows for certain).

FUMITO UEDA PROJECT

The same team that did *Ico* and *Shadow Of The Colossus* has also said it's doing a PSP game;

something involving castles and soft lighting, no doubt.

OUTRUN COAST2COAST

Sega has trademarked the name but what format it'll be on is still shrouded in mystery, but the scuttlebutt says it'll be multiformat.

SONIC TEAM PROJECT

The team's working on something, but whether it's *Phantasy Star Online*, *Sonic The Hedgehog* or something new we don't know. Just please don't let it be a 3D *Sonic*.

Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII

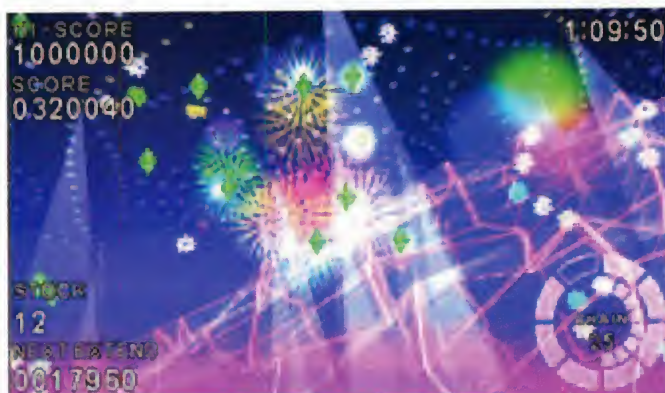
PUBLISHER: Square Enix **DEVELOPER:** Square Enix

THE WHAT: Oddly, there doesn't yet seem to be a standard *Final Fantasy* game on its way to the PSP, but arguably Square Enix has gone one better with a prequel to the series' finest hour. Even though it's supposed to be out in the US in June, very little is known about the game and it's not even clear whether it's a role-playing game or an action title. The one teaser trailer that's been shown so far suggests that the main character is Zack, Cloud Strife's compatriot from when he was still with SOLDIER. Bad boy Sephiroth is in it too and the trailer shows much clashing of swords and spiking of hairdos.

THE WHY: It's *Final Fantasy VII*. On the PSP. End of story.

THE WHEN: 2006.

NEW HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE COMING



A nice big screenshot of *Every Extend Extra*, full of pretty colours and flashing lights like the ones we saw when we ate that old bag of peanuts under our desk.

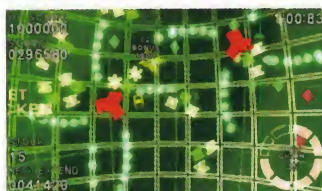
Every Extend Extra

PUBLISHER: Bandai **DEVELOPER:** Q Entertainment

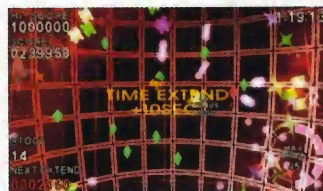
THE WHAT: Tetsuya Mizuguchi's follow-up to *Lumines* isn't quite what you might expect. In fact, it's not even really his game, but a souped up version of a famous shareware PC game (you can play the demo for free here: http://nagoya.cool.ne.jp/o_mega/product/e2.html), now with a brand new soundtrack such as you'd expect from any Q Entertainment game. The basic premise is that you're flying down an abstract-looking tunnel with a limited supply of bombs, which you have to set off in such a way as to cause as much collateral damage as possible and thereby earn you more bombs and more time. Flying pigs are also involved, as well as a series of ultra tricky bosses and a lifetime addiction if you're not too careful.

THE WHY: It's like *Tetris* with bombs, but more addictive.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in Japan).



Every Extend Extra is a colourful addition to the PSP catalogue.



You get to blow things up in a big tunnel thingy. We like.

Exit

PUBLISHER: Taito **DEVELOPER:** Taito

THE WHAT: When your name is Mr Escape there doesn't seem much of a point pursuing a career as a chartered accountant. Instead the fedora-wearing star of this bizarre looking platformer spends his life rescuing people from various fires, earthquakes and natural disasters. The graphics are a keen mix of 2D and 3D, with an unusual Fifties-style art design, as you leap over precipices, douse fires and solve a variety of block-pushing puzzles. Once you've located whoever needs rescuing, you're then able to give them simple commands, like 'push', 'pull' and 'don't leave the gas on next time', to help you get out again.

THE WHY: Super stylish, and nicely original 2D puzzler.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in Japan).



Exit's hero is called Mr Escape. Similarly, our designer, Duncan is known around the office as 'Gordon The Destructor'.

Field Commander

PUBLISHER: Ubisoft **DEVELOPER:** Sony Online Entertainment

THE WHAT: Just to prove there's no style of game the PSP can't bend itself to, this represents the console's first ever turn-based strategy in the UK. Usually the preserve of bearded PC gamers, *Field Commander* not only looks more sexually attractive than any of its peers but it's also got more depth too, with ground elevation playing a vital role and three planes of movement: air, ground and sea. The game's super easy to play and usefully there's a proper Infrastructure online mode in among all the Ad Hoc options. There's even a play by e-mail mode, as well as a map maker and the opportunity to trade your designs online.

THE WHY: The first and only military strategy game for the PSP.

THE WHEN: 2006.



Yes, believe your eyes - *Field Commander* is a genuine turn-based strategy game on your PSP. You don't even need a mouse. Really.

Non-Games for Non-Gamers

Sony has always been dead keen on promoting the PSP's non-games related features and there's plenty of new hardware and software coming in 2006. Keyboard support is promised, as is a camera, microphone, Flash support for the web browser and

voice/video chat. It's the microphone that'll probably get the biggest marketing push though, via the *Talkman* translation doohicky. Already out in Japan it's basically a universal translator, where someone speaks into the mic and their foreign

mumbo jumbo is translated into the Queen's English or vice versa.

Also big on the non-games front is erm... how should we say this? Porn. Lots of it. Clearly Sony isn't too worried about filling it's coffers from any source. A much more wholesome source of revenue

though is the Brain Training fad from Japan - special puzzle games aimed at stimulating your cranium. Sega's PSP entry in the field has been one of the console's biggest selling titles so far in Japan and is being readied for export as we speak (type).

Gran Turismo 4 Mobile

PUBLISHER: Sony **DEVELOPER:** Polyphony Digital

THE WHAT: Before the PSP actually came out Sony was more than happy to imply that *Gran Turismo* would be, if not a launch title, then certainly one of the highlights of the console's young life. As anyone that died of old age waiting for the PS2 version to come out will tell you though, developer Polyphony Digital is not one to be rushed. Cannily, instead of disappointing fans by announcing features that never make it into the final game, it's solved this problem by... not really saying anything about it at all. One thing we do know for sure though, is that the graphics look fantastic.

THE WHY: It's *Gran Turismo* and it looks almost identical to the PS2 version. Which is a good thing.

THE WHEN: 2006 (maybe)



O A screenshot from *Gran Turismo*, which, perhaps a little predictably, is of a car driving along a road. We're sure it's much more exciting in motion.



O We're under the impression that *Infected* isn't for those of a nervous disposition. We're not scared; we're erm... well... er, hard. Or something.

Infected

PUBLISHER: Majesco **DEVELOPER:** Planet Moon Studio

THE WHAT: Coded Arms proved pretty early on if there was one genre that was going to be the PSP's Achilles' heel, it was the first-person shooter. Realising the limitations of the single analogue stick, Planet Moon has instigated a hyper useful lock-on system that allows you to literally run rings around your zombie enemies. Technically the game's not actually first-person, since you can see your character's torso at all times, very slightly like *Resident Evil 4*. Said character is completely customisable and there's the rather nice touch that if you play against someone in multiplayer then your design will 'infect' their PSP and anyone else they play.

THE WHY: Proof that the PSP can do shooters as good as anyone.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in USA).

Socom: US Navy SEALs - Fireteam Bravo

PUBLISHER: Sony **DEVELOPER:** Zipper Interactive

THE WHAT: Although it works like a dream in those games that have used it so far, the PSP's online infrastructure mode hasn't really had the killer app it needs for online portable gaming to become the new rock 'n' roll. This version of the popular PS2 trilogy is just that game but with an experience that's arguably superior to any of the versions that have gone before. The graphics are certainly near identical to the PS2 and you can even get a special headset to chat live as you play. You're only in charge of a two-man team instead of four but that's about the only compromise in this top notch third-person shooter.

THE WHY: So special it forces you to play online (sorry).

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in USA).



O *SOCOM: US Navy SEALs - Fireteam Bravo* will feature soldiers with guns, shooting at other soldiers who also have guns. Probably.

**[SUPER STYLISH, AND
NICELY ORIGINAL]**



O *Tenchu: Shinobi Taizen* has the word 'shinobi' in the title, so already we're pretty excited about its release. Oh, and it looks like a really good game, too.

The Con

PUBLISHER: Sony **DEVELOPER:** Think and Feel Inc.

THE WHAT: We're not convinced *The Con* is a sensible name for a game and indeed this used to be known as *Fighting Spirits*, although that's not much better. Thankfully though, a rose does indeed smell as sweet by any other name and there's lots to get excited about with this unusually pitched boxing/fighting game. You actually control a team of three different characters and are able to bet on the outcome, the idea being that with three different fighters you can actually swing the results your way and still come out if not the victor, then certainly the richer. It's a neat idea and the actual fighting model also seems up to scratch with some nice graphics and plenty of multiplayer modes.

THE WHY: That rarest of things: an original beat 'em-up.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in USA).



O Rarely is the beat 'em-up genre graced with originality but with *The Con*, we might actually have just that.

Tenchu: Shinobi Taizen

PUBLISHER: Sega **DEVELOPER:** From Software

THE WHAT: The world's favourite ninja simulator is coming to PSP and it's brought a surprisingly star studded credits sequence with it. In basic terms, it's business as usual, as you go out on your ninja missions, running around on rooftops, grappling onto scenery and tearing bad guys' livers out without them even knowing. There's a nifty sounding multiplayer mode but what's most interesting is the level editor, which From Software is so keen to promote it's roped in no less than Yuji 'I invented *Sonic The Hedgehog*' Naka, Koki 'I did *Shin Megami Tensei*' Okada and the president of Level 5 and ChunSoft to make their own levels. Create something better yourself using the same tools and you'll officially be the greatest developer in the world.

THE WHY: Play at being a ninja in *Sonic The Hedgehog*'s garden.

THE WHEN: 2006 (already out in Japan).



O *Battlefield 2* drags the fighting into the 21st Century, which, we guess, is why it's called *Modern Combat*, as opposed to 'good-old fashioned combat'.

Battlefield 2: Modern Combat

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts **DEVELOPER:** Digital Illusions (DICE)

THE WHAT: If you're wondering where LucasArts got the idea for *Battlefront* from, then this is it. The original 'inspiration' is set to appear on the PSP and instead of being set during WWII, this one features the present-day wonders of helicopters and uranium-depleted tank shells. The single-player mode is usually of little consequence in a *Battlefield* game, but the multiplayer should allow hordes of players to get online at once and fight it out in giant battlegrounds, either on foot in first-person mode or sat in the driving seat of all manner of tanks, humvees, chopper and planes. And when it comes to online deathmatches there's no better place to be.

THE WHY: One of the best ever online games gets PSP-ified.

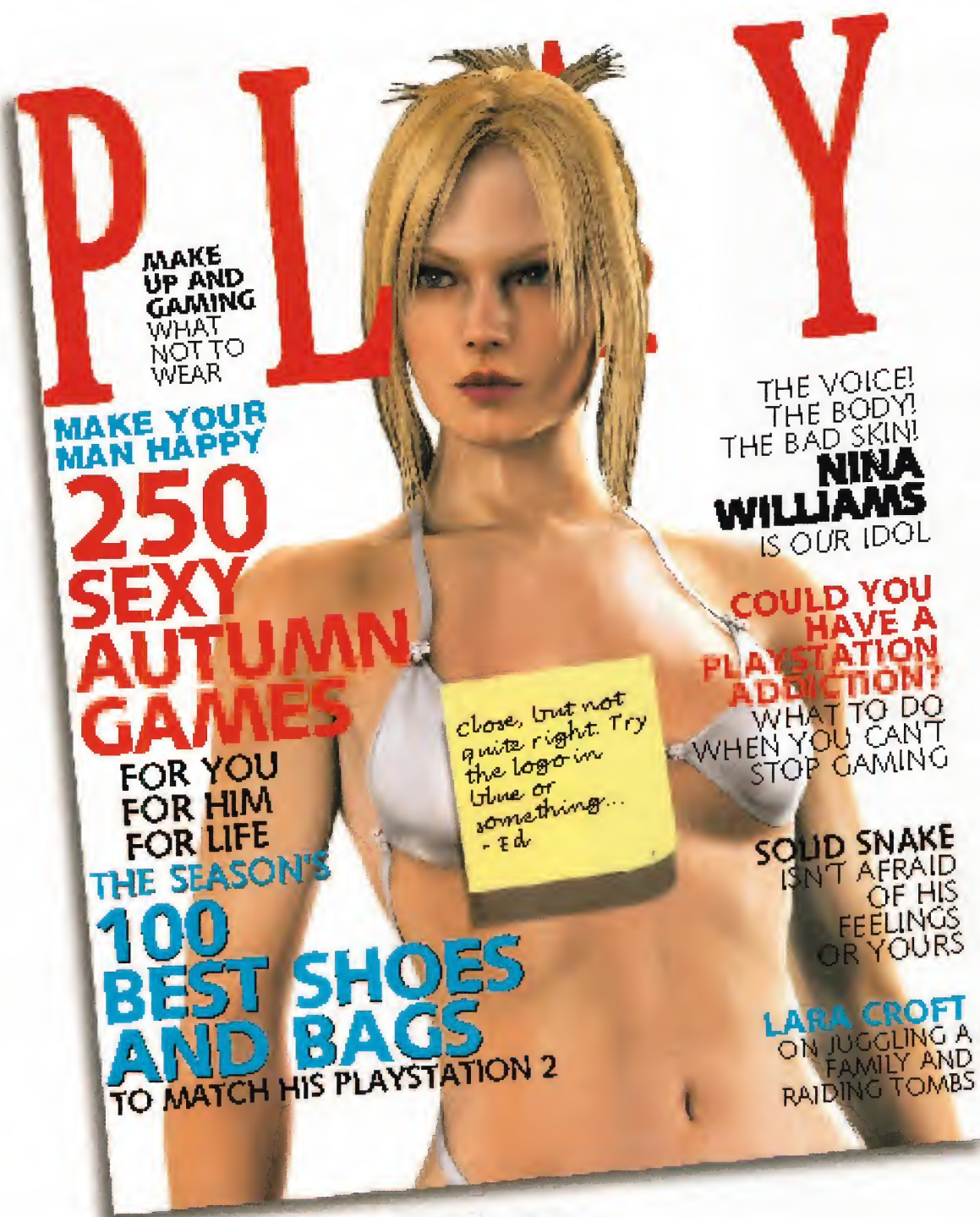
THE WHEN: Spring 2006.

[THERE'LL BE A LOT MORE THAN THIS]

The Best Of The Rest

We've only skated along the iceberg-like surface of next year's PSP schedule, so here's an ultra quick name check of what else is on its way. There'll be a lot more than this as well, including PSP versions of all the big multiformat releases: *Mega Man Maverick Hunter X* (Capcom), *Splinter Cell 4* (Ubisoft), *Worms: Open Warfare* (Codemasters), *Brothers In Arms* (Ubisoft), *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble* (Capcom), *Spongebob Squarepants: The Yellow Avenger* (THQ), *FIFA Street 2* (EA), *Untold Legends: The Warrior's Code* (Ubisoft), *Smart Bomb* (Eidos), *Mega Man Powered Up* (Capcom), *Rengoku: The Tower Of Purgatory* (Konami), *Rengoku 2: The Stairway To H.E.A.V.E.N* (Konami), *Key Of Heaven* (Sony), *Pac-Man World Rally* (Namco), *Princess Crown* (Atlus), *Ape Escape Academy 2* (Sony), *Samurai Warriors: State Of War* (Koei), *Jet De Go! Pocket* (Taito), *Dai Senryaku Portable* (Genki), *Need For Speed Most Wanted 5-1-0* (EA), *ATV Offroad Fury: Blazin' Trails* (Sony), *Armored Core: Formula Front* (Agetec), *Bleach: Heat The Soul* (Sony), *Bust-A-Move Pocket* (Taito), *Doko Demo Issyo* (Sony), *Falner In The Azure: Dead Aggressor* (Bandai), *Generation Of Chaos* (Koei), *Guilty Gear Judgment* (Majesco), *Kotoba No Puzzle: Mojipittan Daijiten* (Namco), *Neopets Petpet Adventure: The Wand Of Wishing* (Sony), *Vulcanus* (Zeppet), *Gradius Portable* (Konami), *PQ: Practical Intelligence Quotient* (Now Production), *Street Fighter Alpha 3 MAX* (Capcom), *Bounty Hounds* (Namco), *Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror* (Sony), *Extreme Ghouls 'N Ghosts* (Capcom).

A NEW LOOK FOR YOUR FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



(we promise it won't look anything like this)

On sale 19 January

Available from WHSmith, Tesco, Sainsbury's and all good newsagents or call for a copy direct on 0870 4448682

REVIEWED

WE PLAY 'EM, WE RATE 'EM, YOU BUY 'EM

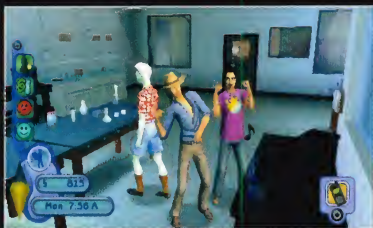
HIGHLIGHTS

The **world class** footballers that you have assembled, trained and tactically prepared head onto the pitch, then behave with all the tactical nous of **St Cuthberts Under 9s Second XI**.

Mike O'Sullivan, tactical genius on his experience with **Championship Manager**.

If you want him to be a **smart young homosexual** with a thing for **cowboys**, then that's the way you can **play the game**.

The **Sims 2** shoots for the pink pound, um, apparently.



There's a **fair chance** that the only way you're ever going to be able to **access many of the memories** that are hidden within you is if someone gives you a **helpful prod**.

Where did you leave your phone (poke)? When's your mum's birthday (jab)? **The Lemmings** come to the rescue.

1 Ooh, look at the fringe! Oh yes! In fact there was a day this month when Clegg refused to come to work just because it was 'raining a bit' and his barnet might be ruined.

2 Don't look into his eyes, this boy hasn't slept properly for about three years, in fact the only thing keeping him awake is an intravenous tea drip.

REVIEWER OF THE MONTH

(As picked by us. Out of a hat)

REVIEWER: Jon Clegg

SUBJECT: What is he all about?

3 Some people like to smarten themselves up before they come to work, but Clegg prefers to take a leaf out of his hero George Michael's book and sport the 'just rolled out of bed' unshaven look.

5 Everyone loves Batman, right? He's the ultimate dark and broody super hero. But Clegg will have us believe that Batman is some sort of feminist icon, thus this 'tasteful' pink number.

4 The fringe might rock but the truth is that Clegg really looks like he has been dragged through a hedge backwards. Twice.

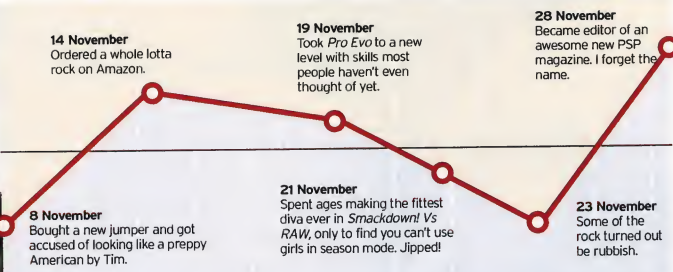
6 Look at the body language - it just screams "EVERYTHING I SAY IS RIGHT!" and he's taking no prisoners. It's better than the 'I'm a little teapot' pose he uses at the weekends at least.

CHAMP OR CHUMP?

A month in the life of the hard-drivin', fast-talkin', junk food-scoffin' go²PLAY review crew



MILES GUTTERY



CHUMP



TONY ENTICKNAP



CHAMP

CHUMP



DISCANT CROOK

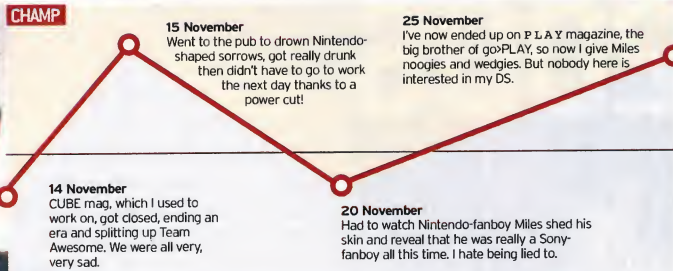


CHAMP

CHUMP



TIM EMPY



CHAMP

CHUMP



KENDALL LACEY



CHAMP

CHUMP

Reviewed this month

Reviews

[44] **WWE SMACKDOWN! Vs RAW 2006**

The entire world of Sports Entertainment rolled up, squished down and stuffed onto a UMD so titchy you can carry it in your socks. Mmmm, wrestlers in your socks!

To find out why, just flip the page...

PLUS ALL THIS!

- [50] Pro Evolution Soccer 5
- [54] Twisted Metal: Head On
- [56] Championship Manager
- [58] Star Wars Battlefront II
- [62] X-Men Legends II
- [64] The Sims 2
- [67] ATV Offroad Fury: Blazin' Trails
- [68] Lemmings
- [70] Crash Tag Team Racing
- [71] Madden NFL 2006
- [72] Go! Sudoku
- [73] Kao Challengers

How we review

The Big Question

Even the fairest-minded reviewer makes assumptions. How good have the developer's other games been? How good are the games this is up against? We outline The Big Questions...

Percentage Score

It's a games mag tradition to score out of 100 per cent, and who are we to break with tradition? Chances are you know how these work, but in case you don't:

- Under 30%** = atrocious
- Under 60%** = pretty damn poor
- Around 70%** = now we're interested
- Around 80%** = well worth buying
- Around 90%** = fantastic. Sell your gran to get it

Summing-Up Line

The whole game boiled down to 15 or so words.



REVIEW

Time to know your role, shut your mouth...
and pick up your PSP

WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006



THE Big QUESTIONS ?

Isn't this the just same as the PS2 game?

Basically, yes it is, but if you don't have a PS2, or just want your wrestling on the go, then *WWF Smackdown! Vs RAW 2006* has a lot to offer.

How is this different from the last game?

Well, it's bigger and better in every way. Think more wrestlers, a more in depth career mode and more of just about everything and you should get the idea.

OUT: NOW

Publisher **THQ** / Developer **Yuke's** / Price **£39.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**

Ever seen a TV show called *Land Of The Giants*? Possibly not, depending on how old you are (although that just makes us feel even more ancient than we already appear to be). Anyway, it told the story of the human crew of a spaceship stranded on a planet full of giants... exciting stuff, we assure you, even if it was made

in the late Sixties. In any case, we can't help but think of one particular episode at the moment - the one where the giants force the tiny humans to fight against one another for their own amusement. Why? Because we've been playing *WWF Smackdown! Vs RAW 2006* on the PSP, that's why; we're the giants, forcing the miniature stars of the WWE to beat each other up over and over again. Not that that's a bad thing, you understand.

Of course, if (like us) you're a huge fan of the WWE and wrestling in general, then you should know

exactly what you're getting yourself in for with *Smackdown! 2006* - all your favourite superstars, a smattering of storylines and plenty of brawling action besides. What you might not expect, however, is to see the whole thing squeezed onto a tiny UMD disc, with very little compromise or sacrifice, but nevertheless, that's exactly what Yuke's has managed to achieve with the PSP version of the game.

If you've played much of the PS2 version, then this may be a mixed blessing... certainly, having



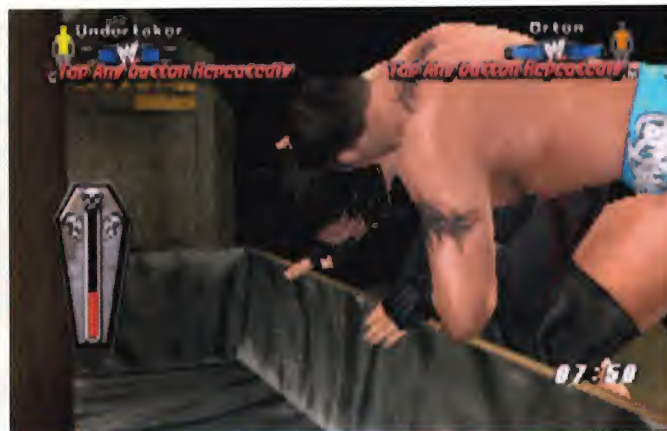
○ We're supposed to write a caption here about this screenshot, but we're still looking at that picture on the opposite page.



○ Tragically, the guy in the yellow boots was born with a wrestler where his right arm should have been, making his pool game a bit poor.



0 Miles lays into our latest recruit with his patented Guttery Bitch-Slap.



0 As the UK's new licensing laws came into force, The Undertaker became it's first casualty as he felt the effects of one too many wine spritzers.

[All this wrestling goodness in your hand is a wonderful thing]

all this wrestling goodness in your hand is a wonderful thing but even so, you might feel a little put out having to play through the game all over again. Still, there's no denying the PSP is decidedly lacking in decent beat-'em-ups (Capcom's efforts don't work as well as they should on the PSP) so THQ has done us a favour with this.

But then, we can't assume everyone's played the PS2 version of *WWE Smackdown! Vs RAW 2006*, so it's probably best to start at the beginning. Not surprisingly, this latest release picks up where the last game (cunningly

entitled *WWE Smackdown! Vs RAW*) left off, in the same way that many of EA's sports titles choose to refine the formula rather than completely rethink it. In this sense, *Smackdown! 2006* is an evolution rather than a revolution - polishing and enhancing key elements to provide the best game of the series yet. That isn't to say that these refinements aren't important or unnoticeable, of course, and even miniaturised onto the PSP as it is, the game is still a few steps ahead of last time...

As always, the core action - namely, the wrestling itself - has been bolstered, to bring it as close to the genuine article as possible. Entrances, for example, are now even more lively and explosive in

order to make them convincing. Modelled on each wrestler's real entrance, complete with all the pyrotechnics and licensed music that you'd expect, they go a long way to creating the atmosphere of the real show. Even here, the little details have been tweaked to make it seem more real, from the announcers being in the ring during each entrance to wrestlers reacting to each other as they enter the ring... it's a small touch, but one that makes a difference.

The same also applies to the actual grappling, which has seen more than a little polishing and even a few new elements. The engine has been adapted to work incredibly well with the PSP's layout (despite there being two



0 Set up the championship however you like, then lay the smack down! We're going for Rick Flair first because he's about 90-years-old.



0 The weirdest WWE fact that we know of? Well, all wrestlers are, in fact, created from the DNA of either Ric Flair or Hulk Hogan.



less buttons and one less analogue stick), meaning there's still a large variety of grapples and moves for players to use: four styles of grapple, with four moves from within each and then a huge array of strikes, reversals and other attacks for each wrestler.

Naturally, there's also plenty of versatility around the ring, with plenty of things for you to interact with such as weapons (usually hidden under the ring), commentator tables and, if you explore further up the ramp, backstage areas too. Indeed, the addition of new backstage brawls - taking place in the parking lot, locker room and even a bar area - offers plenty of opportunity for carnage, as each contains a wide variety of scenery to destroy your opponent with. As for new elements, the game mostly focuses on a new Momentum meter

(allowing the player to decide whether to use their finisher when the match is moving in their favour, thus causing more damage, or to store it for later use) and a Stamina meter that determines how active a wrestler can be. Admittedly, this can prove to be a pain at times, simply because you have to remember to refill it regularly by holding down the Select button, so those people keen on keeping the pressure on their opponents may find themselves running dry and landing on the wrong side of a beating. As such, it's important to take this new concept on board, especially if you have aspirations of making progress through the extensive career mode.

Thankfully, with the exception of the camera (which has been pulled back slightly to cover up the small reduction in visual detail on the

Challenge Anneka

So many tasks, such little time...

Even though you can play through the whole career mode (both sides of it) relatively quickly, we're willing to bet that it'll take you ages to clear every single challenge offered by the game's Exhibition mode. Just as in the

PS2 version, the challenges are split into four categories going from Amateur (easy) all the way up to Legend (incredibly hard) and require key goals to be met such as winning under certain conditions, hitting

particular moves or just plain emerging victorious against the odds. Like we said, they're far from easy but if you're as much of a completist as we are, you'll spend a fair chunk of your time trying to clear the list...



Look at this screenshot and then turn back to page 42. We did.



Ever considerate, Kane puts Hassan into the recovery position.



"Man, I'm getting the hell out of here. That guy in the stripy top is crazy! Look what he did to the other guy."



actual wrestlers), virtually nothing else of the game's presentation or content has seen sacrifice in translation to the PSP. In particular, *Smackdown! 2006* features the largest range of

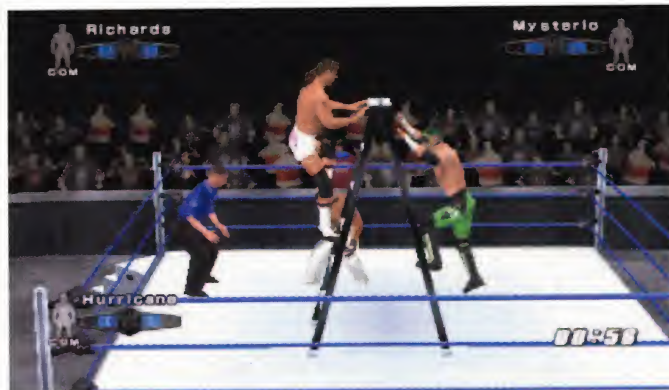
selection, with the usual options such as Ladder, First Blood, Steel Cage, Ironman and Hardcore joined by new additions such as the aforementioned Backstage Brawl, Buried Alive (a full-on casket

[It's possible to make virtually anything that comes to mind]

modes and match styles for you to experience - everything from simple one-on-one matches and tag team competitions, all the way up to big main event contests. It's these that make up the bulk of the

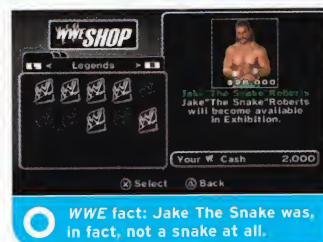
match that only ends with one person buried six feet under) and the somewhat ridiculous but still titillating Fulfill Your Fantasy (girls beating each other up with pillows... like we said, ridiculous), all of which give you plenty of variety when deciding what to beat your friends at over wireless multiplayer. It's a huge selection, and it'll take you a good while to get bored of it all (if ever).

Still, that's not to say you have to play your mates to get the most out of the game; indeed, there's a good deal of things for lone gamers to try too. Of these, it's the Career mode that stands out as a highlight thanks to the extensive refinement that Yuke's has put it through. Not surprisingly, the premise remains almost identical to previous iterations: pick out your favourite wrestler, then guide them through a year's worth of matches and *WWE* broadcasts as successfully as possible. This time around though, the career ahead of you is more extensive than ever. Not only are there two brands to choose from (meaning there are two completely different careers to play) but there are multiple stories within each brand, with your actions and choice of wrestler dictating which ones you get to experience; never mind that each career takes a fair while to complete, it'll take you much



longer to see all the plotlines. Add to that the extra layer of polish the career mode has received - particularly the fact that all wrestlers, including the one you play as and even created wrestlers, have voice-acting to increase the television atmosphere - and it's a real winner.

And then there's the creation side of the game which manages to not only maintain, but actually improve on the level of detail found in previous *Smackdown!* games. Really. We'd even go so far as to suggest that when it comes to creating your own wrestlers, it's



WWE fact: Jake The Snake was, in fact, not a snake at all.

Er... Why?

Three real mini-games, no real point

For some reason unknown to us, Yuke's has thrown a selection of mini-games into the PSP version of *WWE Smackdown! Vs RAW 2006*, perhaps in an effort to set it apart from the PS2 game. However, we don't understand why it

bothered because they're the three silliest things we've ever seen. There's a quiz (which we can kind of appreciate, if only because *WWE* fans like to prove they know the subject matter), Texas Hold 'Em poker (allowing you to play

cards against your choice of wrestlers) and a game where you have to help Eugene keep his balance during his entrance (yes, really). It's all very stupid and if you play them more than once, you've clearly got too much spare time.



WWE fact: Mysterio is a happy man, as he wins another round of poker, "Yes, with my winnings, I can finally afford to buy some new fingers for my right hand!"





The official WWE chiropractor gets to work on another stiff back.

possible to make virtually anything that comes to mind whether it be a recreation of superstars not present in the game or something completely original, there's that much choice. Of course, it doesn't end there - you can also make up

your own pay-per-view events to play out either alone or with friends, and make your own championship belts that you can then build up and fight for. Yes, there really is plenty to do.

Unfortunately, it's not all good news, although at least the slightly more lackluster parts of *Smackdown! 2006* are things you can avoid, rather than them getting in the way of the action. The brand new GM mode, for instance, tries hard to introduce an element of strategy to the game as you try to guide your chosen brand to glory by playing the part of

General Manager, leaving you to plan each show on a weekly basis. Needless to say, this is more tedious than it really should be and is far from fun to play through, so unless you're determined to complete every section of the game, it won't hold your attention for very long. However, only this and the incredibly pointless Arcade mode are worth complaining about in the whole game, and you'll be more than happy with the rest of the package so long as you avoid these two mild duffers.

In fact, it's hard to find much else wrong with the entire

package, and that's impressive considering how the whole thing has been moved onto the handheld format. You'd expect a few more compromises in the process but that's not the case and as a result, the only excuses you've really got for not getting your hands on *Smackdown! 2006* are either you don't like wrestling (which, to be honest, is a fair enough reason) or you don't own a PSP. Other than that, you really don't have much of a choice... ■ **Martin Mathers**

All the action of the PS2 game, but in your hand.

90%



No, it's not another Hot Coffee-style mod. This is actually a screenshot of Martin Mather's mind. Tap repeatedly and he runs into the ring dressed as Tarzan.



The appeal of wrestling can be something of a mystery to non-fans of sports entertainment. We merely point you to The Rock and say "How cool is that guy?"



○ Almar's fancy footwork left the Brazilian hypnotised. Literally. "You will not tackle me or attempt to score in my goal. 3. 2. 1... you're back in the room."



○ With the ref distracted, Raul gave Number Four a hefty boot up the arse. "Eet wasn't me señor referee, honest!"

Sadly it's true - size does matter.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-House** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**

THE Big QUESTIONS

So it's just like the PS2 version, right?

Well it sure looks like *PES 5* on the PS2, and if you stare at it long enough you might convince yourself that it plays the same too. But you'd be wrong.

What? How come?

The controls, mainly. The PSP's hyper-sensitive analogue nub and unresponsive D-pad mean *PES 5* plays less like Thierry Henry, and more like Marlon Harewood - a fast-paced, occasionally stunning performer, let down by some abominable control.

It may be commonly referred to as the beautiful game, but football is capable of conjuring up moments of genuine, gut-wrenching torture. For each last-minute winner heralding ecstatic pandemonium on the terraces, there's a disallowed goal to inflict heartbreaking anguish on shell-shocked supporters. It's this cocktail of sublime elation and agonising despair that makes the world's most popular sport such a captivating, enthralling drama.

Often separated by the narrowest of margins - the width of a goal post, a linesman's flag - joy and despair are present in every encounter. And if Konami was hoping to capture this essence of the game, it's succeeded with this PSP version of *Pro Evolution Soccer 5*. Only not in a good way.

The portable edition of *PES 5* has provided us with some truly magnificent thrills, real moments of heady exhilaration. But it's also responsible for some painfully frustrating experiences that will push you dangerously close to

launching 200 quid's worth of Sony handheld across the room.

The problem, you see, is that it's so nearly perfect. Visually, this is an almost exact replica of the PS2 game; an ultra-smooth, beautifully polished depiction of the sport.

Watch your players knock the ball upfield with a smart series of fluid passes, culminating in your striker controlling the ball with a neat touch of the instep, sidestepping an opponent, before arrowing a shot towards goal, and you'll be convinced this is the same *PES 5* you've been playing on PS2 over the past few weeks.

At first glance it appears the gameplay's here too. Dribbling's a little trickier without an **R2** trigger, but all this really means is a return to the pass-and-move style that

ruled supreme in the earliest iterations of the series.

Some of the more advanced controls have also been pared down, or jettisoned altogether. Manual passing is gone, and likewise the 360-degree pirouettes, and ability to flick the ball up, all activated by the DualShock's right analogue stick.

In truth, though, these are unnecessary, albeit welcome tricks in most players' repertoires. No, what sinks *PES 5* on the PSP isn't what's on the UMD, but a clumsy transition to the platform itself. The same intuitive controls are here, but the PSP's unresponsive analogue nub means playing a simple square-ball is as likely to go ten yards behind as reach its intended target.



○ A classic example of some woeful defending from the blues.



○ Blatant self-promotion alert! Konami love a bit of subtlety.



○ "He's fat, he's round, he's lying on the ground..." Rather shockingly, the keeper manages to completely arse it up again.



Surprising everyone, Ronaldo and the Argle keeper pause for an impromptu game of head tennis.

The problem, you see, is that it's so nearly perfect

With diagonal passes just as elusive on the equally unwieldy D-pad, each foray into your opponent's half is almost destined to end in frustration. And no amount of wrestling with cramped controls can overcome this.

No matter how long you persist with *PES 5*, convinced that sooner or later everything will click into place and you'll have the measure of this portable edition, there's just no escaping the fact that simple passes go wildly astray, delicately-weighted through-balls trickle off in the wrong direction, and attempts to outfox your opponent with slick, one-touch exchanges are lucky to win you a throw-in.

On the few occasions when your intricate approach play is

rewarded, there's a glimpse of what *PES 5* could have been.

Much like English World Cup campaigns however, such moments of quality are all too rare, and the lasting impression is a sense of profound disappointment at what might have been.

Regrettably there are numerous other gripes, though none that will have you so stridently crying foul play and many of them smack of an over-ambitious approach on Konami's behalf.

Most irritating of all are the interminable slow-down problems that occur whenever a large number of players are concentrated within a small area of the pitch. Set pieces, then, are played out in an achingly tedious

Flicks and tricks

Ronaldinho's flamboyant flip-flap finds its way in

Though many of *Pro Evo*'s flashier tricks got lost in translation to PSP, one that did survive is Ronaldinho's elastico move, new to *PES5* on all formats. Tapping R three times sees the

Brazilian feint one way before dextrously manoeuvring the ball the other. Sadly, however, the buck-toothed circus freak is one of just a few players capable of pulling it off. So while

Man Utd's Cristiano Ronaldo and Juve's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, among others, can match the South American, everyone else will have to be content with a simple stepover, and that's just so last year.



This is the definition of the word, 'hopeful'. Honest.



Yet more slack defending in a *PES* game. How odd.



We're not sure what's happened here. But knowing *Pro Evo*, the keeper's probably made a mess of it.



slow motion, like a bullet-time sequence from *The Matrix*, and crop up with sufficient regularity to interrupt the flow of the game.

Contributing to this disjointed feel are load times to test your patience to breaking point. Loading the game up and advancing from the main menu to kick-off takes the best part of two minutes, and that's with an option file already created, and without watching the intro sequence or squabbling over who gets to be Brazil.

Throw in a spot of tactical tinkering in the formation settings

[Slick, one-touch exchanges are lucky to win you a throw-in]

screen, and there's every chance your opponent will have quietly dozed off by the time the match gets underway.

It seems harsh to be overly critical of these two technical faults, both of which are more like concessions to the impressive amount Konami has been able to cram onto UMD, were it not for some truly baffling choices as to what did make the final cut.



The absence of a Master League option is a shame, but one we're willing to admit was probably unavoidable given the constraints of translating the game to PSP. But that doesn't begin to explain the



could have been cast aside to help the in-game action run that bit more smoothly. Or to make space for the Master League or Cup. All of which *PES 5* is crying out for, but which were inexplicably ignored.

With this review starting to read like a particularly nasty rap sheet, it's worth pointing out, once again, that *PES 5* is so nearly the dream experience we'd been hoping for. And, of course, it's streets ahead of *World Tour Soccer* or *FIFA 06*.

Tragically, *PES 5* is undermined by a litany of peccadilloes. Like a hundred tiny paper cuts, none in itself is fatal, but together they're a tragically torturous experience and a painful reminder of what might have been. ■ Jon Clegg

The best PSP football game, 79% but it should've been better.



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A real car-wreck of a game

TWISTED METAL: HEAD ON

OUT: NOW



Publisher **Sony** / Developer **Incognito Inc** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-8** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multiplayer**

THE Big QUESTIONS

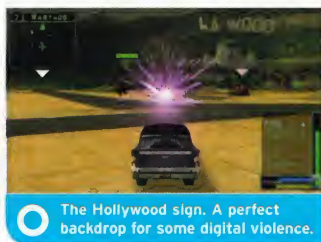


Isn't *Twisted Metal* a little dated by now?
Whereas the home console versions have gone a little stale, the series lends itself well to PSP through some excellent multiplayer action.

Is it worth getting for the single player alone?
That depends on how much you like the gameplay, but for fans, there are plenty of rewards and secrets unlock.

Fancy making a quick buck in the gaming industry? Simply remember these rules: Guns = cash, racing fast cars is great, but smashing them up is better and everyone either owns or wants a PSP. It doesn't take a genius to see that *Twisted Metal: Head On* ticks the right financial boxes, but is it a sound investment for the discerning gamer?

Well, Sony's latest certainly isn't going to set many people's worlds



The Hollywood sign. A perfect backdrop for some digital violence.

alight. The strange mix of cars and guns that is yet to be implemented with any sort of style on any format is yet to be perfected, and judging by this latest performance, there's still plenty of room for improvement.

[It calls for some serious hand-yoga]

The first, most glaring error is the control system, which is guaranteed to have even the most flexible-fingered players writhing around in pain within half an hour of concentrated play. Acceleration has been mapped to the analogue stick or D-pad, meaning that you have to push forwards to move and pull back to reverse whilst attempting to dodge the murderous intentions of your

competitors by pulling left and right. The result is that any sort of controlled movement is extremely tricky. Why, oh why, weren't the **X** and **O** buttons used to accelerate is beyond comprehension. To make matters worse, your secondary fire is situated on the left shoulder button, and as this is the most useful device in the game, it requires almost continuous use. The end result? Well, it calls for some serious hand-yoga to avoid any nasty repetitive strain injuries.

Aside from the poor controls, *Twisted Metal* has all the usual thrills and spills that fans have come to expect from this

Destruction Derby homage series. The racing/combat is extremely slick, and always engaging as you fight to clear each arena of every moving target that crosses your path. The single player enemy AI is finely tuned and it acts sensibly or aggressively according to its particular situation. Gun a hostile four-wheeler down to its final few scraps of health and it will start to desperately search for more



There's nothing unmanly about choosing the pink car - just don't use it when you're networking with mates.



Less skilled players will be pleased to know there are a decent amount of homing missiles scattered around the arenas.

health (or a larger weapon to scare you off with), but at the same time, you may also find yourself losing kills to opportunist opponents who swoop in and finish off your quarry when they notice their health is low. This makes the game refreshingly challenging - something that could have easily been forgotten in such an obviously multiplayer skewed franchise. Sure, the main campaign mode is little more than a series of missions throughout the game's various levels where Last Man Standing rules always

apply, but trying to attach a complex storyline to a guns'n'cars game is fairly pointless. The droning hard-rock soundtrack and well sampled weapon sound effects neatly provide all the aural immersion you could want to compliment a prolonged session of fender-bending no matter what your usual musical preferences might be.

However, true to form it's the multiplayer element that will entice most players to buy *Twisted Metal*, and thankfully, it doesn't disappoint. The pure



Ah, la Tour Eiffel, how often I have trashed thee...

The Specialists

A vehicle for every persuasion

There are more than a dozen vehicles available in the game. Most are already unlocked at the start but some are hidden away for the more dedicated racers. Each one has its own

unique attack that can be employed a number of times during each race when firing missiles, napalm and saw-blades at your opponent just isn't enough. The most

impressive belongs to the hulking JCB, which picks up its victims and batters them against the ground repeatedly. Had plenty of health left? Not any more, matey.



This swarm of missiles won't inflict much damage unless they all strike the same target, so make sure the enemy is properly in your sights before unloading.

pleasure of zooming around a large oval arena taking out your friends is a feeling that's tough to beat in the realms of handheld gaming, and this is the cornerstone of the *Twisted Metal* experience. True, this does mean that in order to get the most out of it you do need to find seven or so mates who are all a) in possession of a PSP, b) have a copy of the game, and c) don't mind mangling their mitts for an hour or so - but once you find this special bunch, there are few games on the system that are able to match the pleasure on offer here.

The moral of this particular story is that if you're willing to overlook the basic control flaws, slightly dated look, and the painfully simple single player mode, there's plenty of fun to be had with *Twisted Metal*. Just remember this - playing with yourself is unfulfilling and may cramp your hand. ■ **Andy Hartup**

Great multiplayer game with a handful of basic errors. **70%**





The biggest dreams can now be fulfilled on the littlest console

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Eidos** / Developer **Gusto**
/ Price **£34.99** / Players **1** /
Supports **Downloadable content**

THE Big QUESTIONS

Is this by the same guys that handled the PC version?
No. Beautiful Game Studios was responsible for the PC version (and its many faults), and Gusto has been brought in to concentrate specifically on the console build of the game.

How many different leagues are available to play in?
You'll be able to choose between 12 different countries and 55 leagues to manage in, but you will not be able to move from one country to another, nor is it possible to manage international teams.

Championship Manager is one of the best-known brands in videogaming, having existed since 1993, with millions of copies sold throughout its lifespan. Inevitably, expectations for the franchise are high, with a demanding army of fans having seen the game improve with each iteration. However, following Eidos's split with developer Sports Interactive, the game has been forced back to square one, with new development teams working on building a game from the ground up, rather than refining the previous version with the benefit of another year's experience. Unsurprisingly, the first version for the PC was something of a car crash. Although it sold well, it's generally accepted that this was down to the strength of the *Championship*

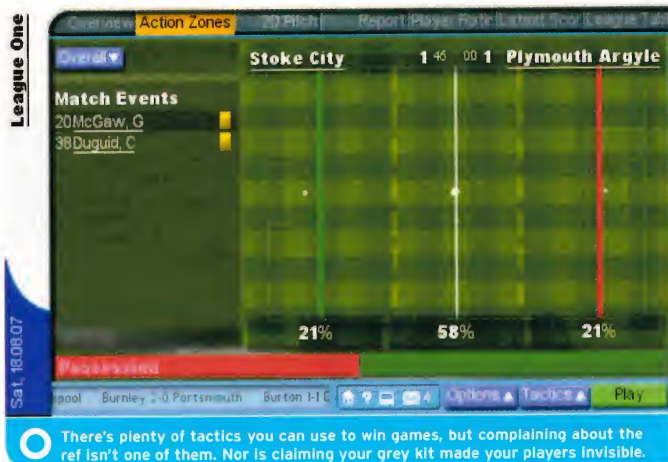
Manager brand, and not the game's quality.

The console versions were developed by a different team - Gusto - and fared a little better than the PC version in critical terms, but work still had to be done. For this second round of SI-less *Champ Man*, the game has been brought to a handheld for the first time, and although it's a solid start, there's still plenty of work to be done and more than a little room for improvement.

Some rather exciting scores from *Champ Man*. Go Cherries go!

The basic gameplay is technically pretty sound, and Gusto has done a commendable job of fitting the huge game that is *Championship Manager* onto PSP. There are 55 leagues to select from, which are impressively deep (the English league features the Conference, for example), and the database of players is suitably complex. A wide range of tactical options are available for players to tinker with, choosing everything from the basic formation (or creating your own) to deciding the tempo that the team should play at and whether they should look to counter-attack quickly down the wings or retain possession with a short passing game. Best of all, these are serious, game-changing options, not a minor irrelevance that won't have a major effect on gameplay. It's gloriously involved and excellent stuff.

Oh, the glory of the League One table is a truly divine thing.



As well as tactics, there's a vibrant and detailed transfer market, which while featuring annoying anomalies from time to time, largely does exactly what it's there to do.

So far, so good. The problems only loom into view once matches begin to play out. The first problem is the match engine, a top-down view that shows the

tactical nous of St Cuthberts Under 9's Second XI. Centre-halves leave huge gaps in defence for strikers to run into, players frequently make stupid runs or ignore the ball when they could have won it, strikers miss open goals with alarming regularity - the illusion of realism is destroyed by an element that should have been left out until the developer

There are serious game-changing options... it's gloriously involved

players as little blobs on the pitch. Sports Interactive introduced this to *Champ Man 4*, but had taken years to reach the stage where it felt it could introduce such an element with confidence. Gusto hasn't had that kind of time, and it shows. The world class footballers that you've assembled, trained and tactically prepared head onto the pitch, then behave with all the

has enough experience to implement it efficiently.

Unfortunately, things don't get much better with the highlights turned off; if you plan to have the text commentary on anything other than slow, it can't keep up with the action. Events pop up in the blink of an eye, with messages like 'He'll kick himself for that!' Who will? What's he done?

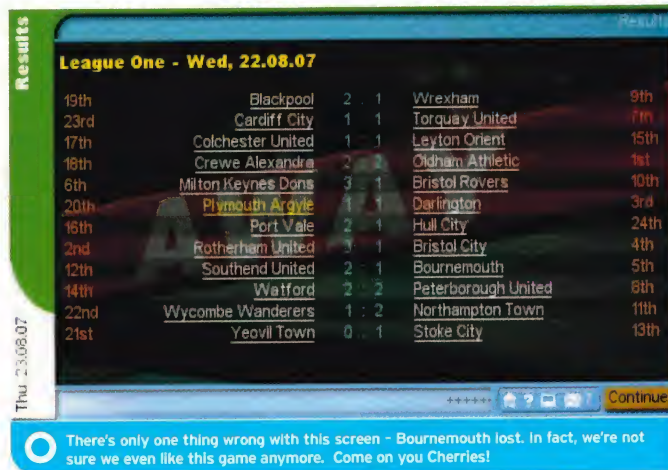
Ooooh... you sad b*stard!

Some people ought to get out more

Over the years, odd *Champ Man*-induced behaviour has been commonplace. Our favourite example is the story of a man

who guided his team to the FA Cup Final, whereupon he promptly saved the game and stopped playing. The following

Saturday, he donned a suit and played the match out in real time at 3:00. Half of us wants to kill him, half of us wants to be him.



This dodgy match engine isn't helped by some inconsistent results that further undermine the feeling of realism. Playing through a season with Chelsea, we managed a league record of played 38, won 31, drawn seven. We finished second with 100 points. Bigger.

However, it isn't all doom and gloom, and this is a far more promising start for *Championship*

Manager than Eidos has managed on any other format so far. The dip in-and-out nature of the game makes it ideal for leisurely passing time and football fans everywhere will probably be prepared to overlook the game's flaws and get stuck into another *Champ Man* campaign. **Mike O'Sullivan**

Flawed in parts, but still life-consumingly addictive **80%**





○ Princess Leia may not have any Force powers, but fortunately she has the unique ability to tap into her PMT.



○ The lads love to get together from time to time and do a *Star Wars* version of the stand-off scene in *Reservoir Dogs*.

Aren't you a little small to be a PlayStation game?

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

THE Big QUESTIONS ?

So the controls are problematic then?

They are, but Pandemic has done a sterling job of creating the best shooter interface possible, considering the restrictions of the PSP's design.

The first *Battlefront* had Jedi, but you couldn't control them - has that changed?

Yes. Jedi, Sith and other non-Force equipped 'heroes' (Princess Leia, etc) feature in the game, and you earn the right to use them as you play through. You haven't lived till you've taken on as Darth Vader!

OUT: NOW

Publisher **LucasArts** / Developer **Pandemic** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**

Barely had the world of console gaming come to terms with the sheer awesomeness (which, you may be surprised to learn, is actually a real word - look it up) of *Star Wars Battlefront II* on the PlayStation2, than the PSP code arrived in the the office. "Brilliant," we all screamed, and a brief battle (involving extremely cool, but WAY

too expensive replica lightsabers) broke out among the team for the honour to be the first to test it out. Upon loading the game though, you quickly realise that something is very wrong - the PSP, as is immediately obvious to anyone with eyes, has one less analogue stick than the PlayStation2... so how in the hell was anyone supposed to play this game properly then?!

Yes, the first thing that strikes you about *Battlefront II* on PSP is something which will no doubt be an issue with any first and third-person shooter which is released for Sony's otherwise wondrous handheld machine: there's clearly a problem with the controls. It's a simple fact that shooters on the PS2 work as well as they do, because the dual analogue sticks allow you to move in all directions and also look around (essential for

aiming on the go) at the same time. The PSP, however, as we've said - damn you Sony - only has one stick.

Strangely enough though, the thought didn't really occur at first, mainly because we'd spent a large chunk of the previous few weeks playing *GTA: Liberty City Stories* - also effectively a third-person shooter - and that works great with just the one stick. However, that's because in *GTA*, shooting things is only one part of the gameplay so the design features a very handy auto-targeting system. While *Battlefront* does have a target lock option, you still have to be able to actually point at each enemy at least once to make it work.

Now clearly the control system is something that the guys at Pandemic thought very hard about, because there's a choice of



○ "This is Gold Leader! I've been hit, but I'm okay. I should be fine to make it back to base... oh bug..."



○ Spies! There's one punishment for them, and it's NOT a dry Martin.



○ The Rebels' plans for an army of midgets didn't get beyond testing.



"I'm telling you, Vader is all mouth! He's not half the Sith Lord our last boss was... he's behind me, isn't he?"

(not one, not two, not even three, but...) four different control methods: Default, Basic, Advanced and Retro. To save you all a little time when you first play the game though: the ONLY control system

Why? Well somehow, Pandemic has managed to cram pretty-much the entire PS2 game onto the UMD, with room left to add a few extra modes to boot. Notably: three solo campaign modes, where

[the ONLY control option that works is the Retro option]

that works is the Retro option, which effectively treats the \times , \square , \triangle and \bigcirc buttons as a directional pad, thus filling in for the 'missing' analogue stick. Let's just make this very clear: NONE OF THE OTHER CONTROL METHODS ARE ANY USE AT ALL. Not unless you're happy to do your moving, looking and shooting completely separately. And that said, even when using the Retro method, it takes an awful lot of perseverance to get your head around the controls... but it *is* worth it.

you take on the role of either a Rebel Raider, Imperial Enforcer or Rogue Assassin. Admittedly these modes aren't earth-shatteringly original - they simply stick you in the role of a specific character for a series of challenges on the usual game maps - but they do add a little variety and thus increase the longevity of the overall package.

Aside from that, this is pretty-much the PS2 game. For those of you who managed to miss it, what the gameplay involves is playing as one of the many characters in the

Space... But smaller

Fans will notice a couple of minor differences from the PS2 version...

In the PS2 game, you can land on the enemy ships and take out various targets (like the shield generators and life support systems) on foot from within the craft itself. While you can still land on ships in

the PSP version, you're basically restricted to the hangar bays, which is a bit pointless unless you want to nick an enemy craft. This makes winning space battles fairly methodical, as you just systematically

destroy the various defences by shooting them one at a time. It also makes one of the ship classes - the troop transport - fairly pointless, as it was only ever handy for flying troops over to the enemy's ship for a battle.



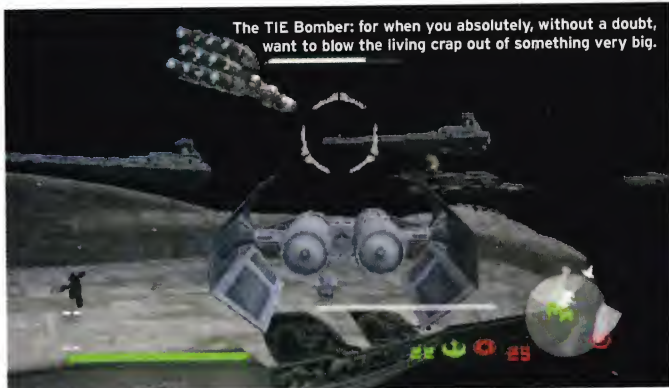
O TIE fighters are cool. Why doesn't NASA have any yet



O Oh, the joy of attacking an Imperial Star Destroyer!



O "Not good enough for Imperial Officer training, am I? I'll show him." We don't take rejection well, be afraid.



Star Wars universe and engaging in a succession of first or third-person battles across a variety of different maps. In battle, you work as part of a primarily AI-controlled team taking on a likewise AI-controlled enemy team, and you win each round by either eliminating all the enemy troops, or by capturing all the bases on the map, without which the enemy is unable to bring new troops



because there are few things cooler than entering the field of battle as a Stormtrooper (except possibly as Boba Fett, which you can also do!)

All in all, the PSP version of *Battlefront II* is almost as enjoyable to play as its big brother. The reasons that it's not quite as 'must-have' as the PlayStation2 version lie with the numerous small, but significant,



Someone forgot to turn off the gas cooker in the Imperial canteen again.



So, you up for a swift one down the pub afterwards then Bob?

[If you don't own a PS2, then it comes highly recommended]

into the game. Should your character get killed, then - providing your team still has troops in reserve - you simply pick a new one and get back into the fight.

The ground battles take place on a various planets from all six *Star Wars* movies, and there are a whole host of characters to choose from, depending on what time period you're playing in (ie: the new or the classic movies) and whether you're playing for the good guys or the bad. Without doubt, most people seem to be drawn to playing as the Imperials from the classic movies, mainly

differences between the two games. Multiplayer mode, for instance, only supports four people. Fun, but not anywhere near as enjoyable as the 24 players online on PS2. The loading times too, are much longer, which might not seem that major, but they can get annoying during prolonged play. Then there are elements which, if you're a fan of the PS2 game, will be conspicuous by their absence, like in the space battle sections where you can only damage enemy ships from the outside.

All this might sound like nit-picking, but the fact is *Battlefront II* is near-perfect on PS2, so if you're going to produce a PSP version, it needs to be at least as good to impress as much. As it is, this is still a great game once you've mastered the controls. If you don't own the PS2 version then it comes highly recommended. ■ Ryan King

The shoot-'em-up fun of the *Battlefront* games on PSP. **80%**



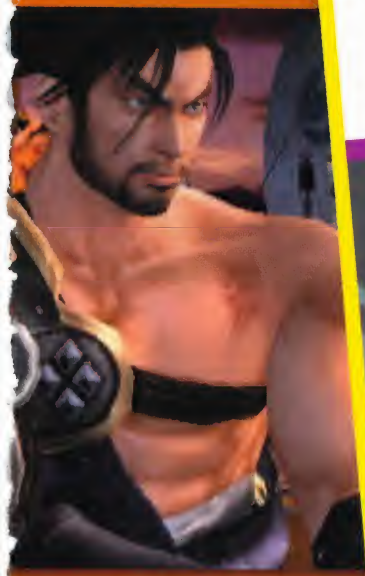
"Got you trapped now mate. Nowhere to run to - what you gonna do now, eh? Ah... that." Always think before you speak.



There are plenty of vehicles to take control of both on the planet's surface and up in space. And they all have lasers. S. W. E. T.

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X-Men on the PSP - exactly the same as the other versions

X-MEN LEGENDS II: RISE OF APOCALYPSE

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Activision** / Developer **Raven** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer, Wi-Fi internet multiplayer**

THE Big QUESTIONS

I like the X-Men, will I like this?
No. There are a few X-charms but the game isn't good enough to make you like it.

I work in a factory, will I like this?
Yes. You obviously enjoy repetitive actions, you'll lap this up!

If you read any other videogame magazines you probably already know that *X-Men Legends* // isn't very good. It's a multiformat release, so it's spread across the consoles like some tasteless butter substitute, pretending to be fun and that it might add something to your videogame toast. But when you bite down it's just yellow goo. For a more detailed explanation, but with less talk of toast, read the next paragraph, thanks.

Rise Of Apocalypse sees the X-Men and, well, everybody under

attack from the immortal Apocalypse who is hunting down mutants and conducting experiments on them. Since this is a threat to all mutantkind, the X-Men team up with Magneto's Brotherhood to put an end to Apocalypse's plans. Neato!

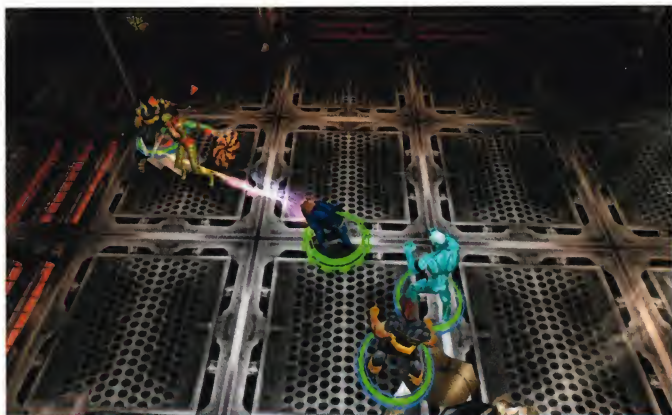
That all sounds rather exciting doesn't it? Sounds even more exciting when we tell you that there are 16 playable characters from the *X-Men* universe, each with their own powers to level up, and there are locations such as the Dead Zone and



O We sometimes dress as the X-Men during our lunch breaks. Honest.



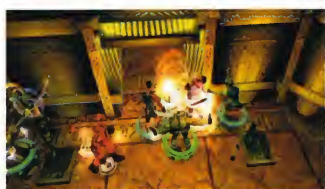
O You can control loads of different characters from the *X-men* series, but since the game's so useless, it doesn't make much of a difference.



○ Lady Deathstrike pops up and tries to stick you with her fingernails. Get them cut lady! This isn't a fashion parade!



○ Even if you're not a fan of the X-Men, you can't help but admire Wolverine. He's not in this screenshot, but he's superfly, like our very own Miles G.



○ "They gave our game 69 per cent. Heh heh. 69 dude!"



○ Often you're left alone while your rubbish AI helpers do nothing.

the Savage Land and even Mr Sinister makes a cameo appearance. Mr Sinister's brilliant; he's got such a rubbish name.

Unfortunately, actually playing the game isn't that exciting. You have control of one of four mutants, with the other three being controlled by pacifist AI, who really don't like to attack in case they get hurt, even

All you have to do is surround an enemy and keep pounding away

when you set their AI to Aggressive. And so it's up to you to save the world... by throwing various switches and constantly beating up endless hordes of enemies.

On every level you have to work your way round uncovering any blank spots on the map, in case you've missed a switch, while hundreds of enemies attack you. It's easy to take them out - you can use combos and all manner of superpowers but it becomes so repetitive that even the promise of more powerful, er, powers is little incentive to carry on. There is no skill involved when all you have to do is surround an enemy and keep pounding away at it until it flickers and disappears. You can even take all the fun out of levelling-up by setting up the procedure to automatic, with the computer making the selection of which powers to add stat points too and even which special powers

are available to your characters, which becomes a pain when Iceman really needs to make a bridge and you have to go into the menus that take ages to load to switch it back.

Although choosing to do it yourself will add hours to the game time, as you dither over whether Cyclops would really benefit from an upgrade to his Strike stat or his Mellee one. There are clothes and armour to pick up as well, but just as you've found a good one you realise you can't use it

until you reach a certain level, by which time you'll have found better ones to wait on. It's like buying trousers that are too big for you, but you'll grow into them.

Elsewhere there is some well-researched trivia with tons of information on the characters' pasts and their storylines. But then this is a game not a web site. ■ **Tim Empey**

Legends II isn't legendary, it's barely even a myth. 69%

Mutant Powers

You level up and level up...

...and what do you get? A smart bomb. And not a particularly good one either. By the time you've got through most of the Story, you'll be able to use the X-Attacks. Each character

has three and each character uses it like a smart bomb. It looks nice as they charge up to unleash it and the screen goes all mad colourful, but once it's over you get the

distinct impression you've been jipped. There are still enemies on the screen and an infinitesimal amount of damage will be done to a boss. These mutants have rubbish powers.



○ Surround an enemy and batter them to death - with tactics like that you can't lose. Apart from in the gameplay stakes, anyway.



○ He's going to explode! Cable charges up his rubbish smart-bomb power. The enemy trembles with fear, then realises it won't actually hurt.



○ "Look, you're stupid in the head I tells ya, stupid!" said the lady whose boyfriend was dressed as a commando for no apparent reason.



○ "I'll take seventeen Big Macs and two large fries. Please ignore the small lady who appears to be floating next to me."

Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?

THE SIMS 2

OUT: NOW



Publisher **EA** / Developer **Maxis** /
Price **£34.99** / Players **1-2** /
Supports **Wi-Fi LAN** multiplayer

THE Big QUESTIONS (?)

Surely you can't reproduce *The Sims* on a handheld?

Well, Maxis has proved you wrong - everything that you loved about previous games is here, the graphics are great and there's enough to do to keep you away from real life for some time.

We were highly addicted to the PC version, can this recreate that excitement?

Oh yes, this is one of the most addictive games you're going to play this year and you'd better clear your calendar if you're going to get the most out of it.

You know, we hate real life, we really hate it. Deadlines, work, work, pub, club, sleep. Alright, we like the pub bit but the rest of it we can do without. Well, now thanks to good old Maxis, you no longer have to be yourself - you can control someone else's life and become a success and an ace face in the virtual world. Sweet. *The Sims* has always been one of the most complex and addictive series and *The Sims 2* on the PC really took it to the next level. Handheld

versions (on the GBA) have so far been entertaining but you can't shake the feeling that you're not getting the whole *Sims* experience. Luckily, now that the PSP gives you home gaming quality on the go, *The Sims 2* has been reborn as a handheld winner - sure, it's not exactly the same game you've played at home but it is an involving and deep gaming experience and we've been having the time of our (or someone else's) lives playing it - so much so that you're lucky to be reading this as Kendo The Sim is about to learn the secrets of every girl in town. Ahem, where were we...?

The Sims 2 on PSP has an exclusive story and all the action takes place in the aptly named Strangetown where you are attempting to become a big success. The game opens with you driving through a desert when a tyre blows and you find yourself stranded in the aforementioned town. Your first social encounter is with the local mechanic who is not

the brainless oaf you might at first expect. He teaches you a valuable lesson - that in order to get everything you need in this brave new world, you'll first need to chat to the locals and listen to what they have to say (not literally of course). In terms of sound, the game still sees the characters talking in their crazy Sim voices and it's the subtitles that really tell you what's going on) and react accordingly.

The more you talk to people, the more they will trust you and you might also get some lovin' out of the deal too - as once you engage in conversation, there's always the opportunity to flirt and see what happens. When we say always, we mean it - there is no predetermined sexuality for your Sim, so if you want him to be a smart young homosexual with a thing for cowboys, then that's the way you can play the game, only flirting with the male characters; the end result will be the same. Personally, we'd rather hang out



○ "Sorry fella, I only date guys who have a pulse." Once again, the dead guy's offer of lovin' from beyond the grave is rebuffed.



○ "Of course I like to read but I also like to get jiggy..."



○ "This one is called 'The Pixel Blues', I woke up this morning..."

The Take That comeback tour proves a roaring success.



with the lovely Bella Goth, but it's liberating to have the choice. Once they trust you, the Sims will give up their secrets and these can be used to gain more power and success in Strangetown.

Despite this 'every man/woman/Sim for themselves' attitude, in order to get the most out of *The Sims 2*, you need to bring the Wi-Fi options into play, which not only allow you to swap the secrets you have learnt with other players, but there are also a series of eight mini-games that are

of trying to beat the other player, you are trying to do the same as them. This is basically how it works: if you meet someone who wants to talk about art and you hit the icon for cooking, for example, they get infuriated that you're not listening, whereas if you reply with the art icon, they will become more interested in you and those magical + points will float above your head. More

There is always the opportunity to get some lovin'

a lot of fun to play and also help you solve more of the secrets of life in Strangetown.

Conversing with the Sims is simple and fun. Imagine a rock-scissors-paper game where instead

small talk, therefore will lead to more secrets.

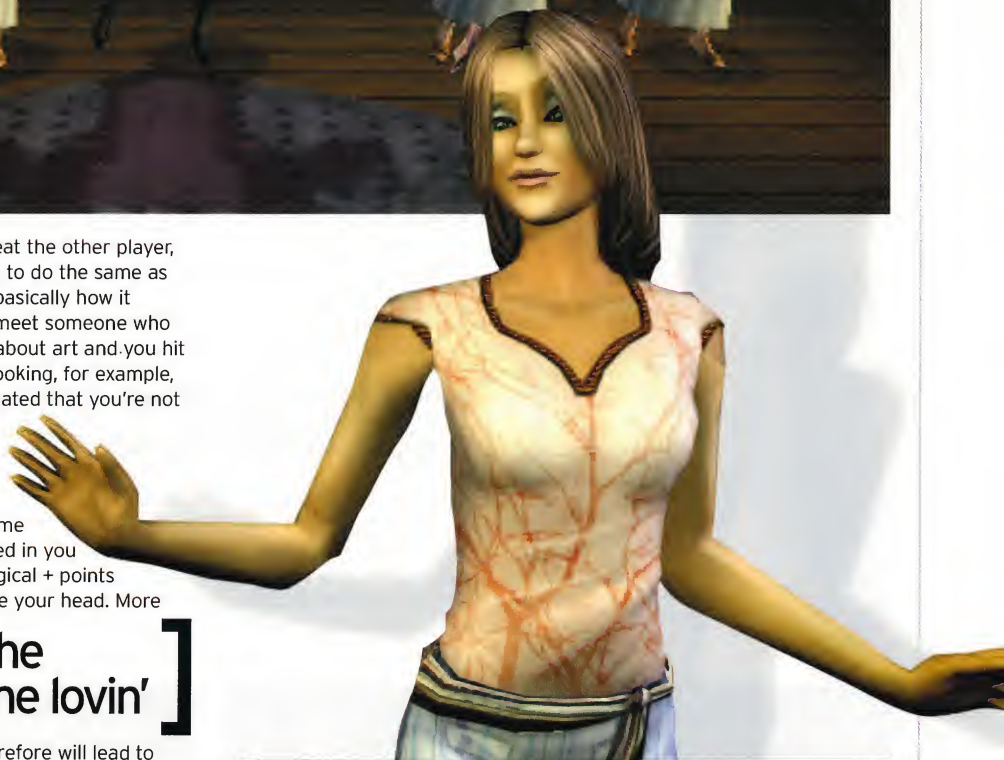
So what dangers lie ahead of you in Strangetown? Basically it is your sanity that you need to watch out for - throughout the game you



Does my bum look big in this?
No, but your head's enormous.



Let's quit the talkin' and get down to some serious snogging!



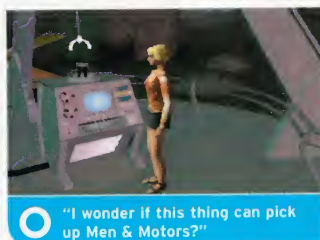
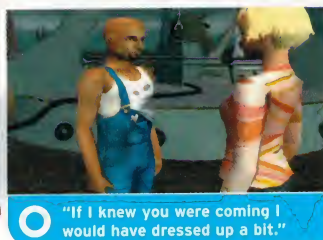
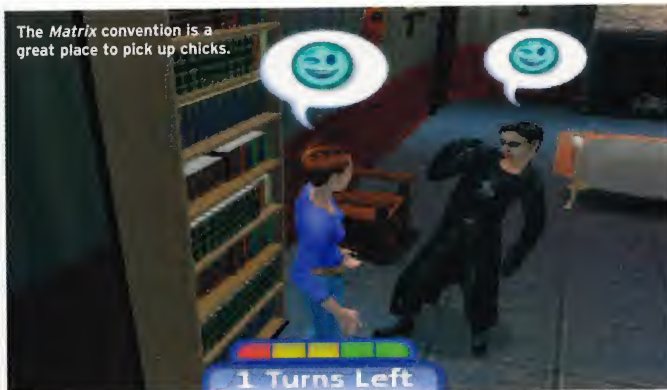
Make me pure

What not to wear

The first thing you have to do is create your ultimate Sim. There's a ridiculous amount of options open to you, so it's not just a case of choosing male or female. You can choose the colour of your character's eyes, choose whether they wear a t-shirt or

go for the smart suit option, there's even the opportunity to choose the skin tone of your Sim. If you don't want to make a Sim that resembles you, you can always go for the bizarre Green Skin option, which makes you look like some kind of zombie. Nice.





have unique life aspirations that you need to fulfil. Doing so makes you more content and confident, but if instead you end up facing your fears, your Sim freaks out and rather than getting some easy action with the ladies, ends up having a nervous breakdown. By the time this happens, it's really quite affecting as you'll find yourself becoming very attached

Don't worry if you're a *Sims* virgin. Although the game may look daunting at first, as you get to talk to more characters in the town, each teaches you a little more about how to get the most out of the game. This is a brilliant idea, as it means you get to avoid the usual tedious training mode and can just jump straight into the social action.

The game has been tweaked to work better in your hands

to your pixelated alter ego and seeing him go mental is not nice. Yes, we've really fallen for these console personalities and you will too, whether you've been playing *The Sims* since the beginning or if this is your first encounter.

The town environment is huge and it really is up to you how long you spend solving each section of the game. Grab the secrets and run, or search each area for all the secrets and goodies hidden within. If all this

sounds very deep and time consuming then you're right - it is - but the PSP does allow you to save your progress at any point, so even if you've only got time for a quick blast, then *The Sims 2* is a worthy way to spend your time.

Often the spirit of a series can be lost when it is transported to another platform. However by tailoring *The Sims* to Sony's wonder-machine, Maxis has ensured that everything that made the series such a success on home machines remains, while it's been tweaked to work better in your hands.

Once again, *The Sims 2* is a triumph, but we should warn you that after creating your ultimate Sim and getting involved in his world, you might find the real world offers little for you once you switch the PSP off and you might be wishing you were in Strangetown 24-seven. Don't worry - it happens to us all. It's that good a game. ■ **Kendall Lacey**

The Sims 2 offers you a life worth living! 86%



"I'm telling you Julia, it was THIS big!" Two ladies discuss their experiences of a late evening.



"Of course I am a sensitive artiste!" Another stropky artistic type has a winge about being persecuted for his genius, integrity and blah, blah, blah.



We count six racers in this screenshot, but in play there's only four at a time.



Warning... please don't try this one at home!

Shut your mouth and look at my quad!

ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS

OUT: TBA



Publisher **Sony** / Developer **Climax** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer, Wi-Fi internet multiplayer, downloadable content**

THE Big QUESTIONS ?

Can you guess what it is yet?

Enter your garage, and *ATV Blazin'* allows you to customize just about anything - from a flashy new paintjob for your quad to ten-layer logos and uniforms for your driver.

Will you be my buddy?

Yes, we hate this awful American word too, but the buddy system allows you to contact you mates and filter who you play against according to their skill. There's also plenty of downloadable content which is unlocked according to your overall ranking.

A *TV Blazin'* (sorry, we draw the line at 11 subtitles) is seriously hardcore. It's a dirt-track racing game with so many button-press combos it takes a good hour to get past the training levels alone, thanks in part to slow loading times, frame-rate and occasional animation glitches that trap your quad bike against bits of scenery or worse still stop the game dead in its tracks.

Yet despite such reservations, it's hard to slag off too mercilessly. If you survive the learning curve and the occasionally ropey graphics, a game of enormous skill, depth and variety emerges. And the multiplayer options are so well implemented you'll never be short of a challenge - thanks to a nifty

'buddy' system that ensures you're up against racers of similar ability.

The idea is simple; race your quad-bike across various circuits, from Offroad to Supercross. The tournament mode pits you against three other racers and staying ahead of the bunch is no easy task, thanks to an over-sensitive

powerslide function that often grinds you to a halt. Still, if you tire of racing, there are nine mini-games, including soccer and basketball, that improve poor first impressions. ■ **Mike Anderiesz**

If you can live with its limitations, it's great fun. **70%**

Stunted growth

There are stunts galore to wow your friends - IF you can memorise them all

Performing easier stunts like Cat-Nac involves no more than pressing two buttons but for higher scores you need to link them

together like a beat-em-up combo. Most are achieved using the analogue nub, which as you might expect, proves nigh on impossible for

extended combos. Luckily, the direction keys work just as well but you'll still need the memory of a mainframe to rack up serious points.



Strangely, the bigger offroad circuits look a lot better than the stadium-based ones. You can almost feel the sand between your toes.



Cat-Nac is one of the easier stunts to pull off. Easy in the game that is. Probably not so easy in real life, eh.



What's pink and green and read all over?

LEMMINGS

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Sony** / Developer **Team 17**
/ Price **£29.99** / Players **1-2** /
Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**,
Downloadable content

THE Big QUESTIONS

Is it as good as I remember it being?

You betcha, there's no way of just picking it up for a quick go. Once you start, you're going to be hooked all over again.

I have no skills. Is it really as difficult as it sounds?

Not at all. Well, not if you hang around the beginning levels anyway. Once you get halfway through, you're really going to have to use that brain of yours.

If you cast your mind back to 1990, you probably won't remember much. Time has a funny affect on the brain and unless you're an avid photographer and catalogue every other moment of your existence, you probably won't be able to access many of your memories unless someone gives you a helpful prod.

This is exactly what happened when we fired up *Lemmings* for the first time. The memories. Oh, the memories. Although the series has far from faded, more recent

installments such as *Lemmings Revolution* on the PC failed to impress and wandered from the tried and tested formula. No, if you think right back, you'll remember the joy of the original and *The Tribes*, both of which sucked up

vast hours of our time and - we're willing to bet - still would, had the floppy discs not been destroyed in the great culling of '95.

Fortunately, we're being given the chance to relive those happy days, thanks to the PSP. That's



The backgrounds have been spruced up for this version. We like.



Each Lemming has a personality of its own (in our minds, at least) and these two closely resemble our very own Miles and Jon. Can you tell which is which?



right, the little blighters are back, but they're not quite the same as you remember. *Lemmings* has had a graphical overhaul and is looking as pretty as a picture. Where bland stone towers once stood, pyramids

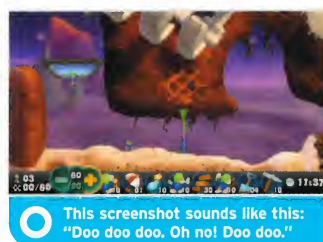
the stick to control the cursor. We miss the ability to jump to an area with a quick click on a map, but this isn't a perfect world and this is probably as good as it's going to get on a console without a mouse.

It's a bit like having your memories polished

tower and the previously dreary backdrops now come in sparkling crystal cavern and blossoming meadow flavours - it's a bit like having your memories polished.

Of course, the looks and style of the game were never in question; it's the controls that were always going to be the deciding factor. Whenever the series has wandered from its PC home, the lack of a mouse has meant the speed and accuracy required to save the suicidal beasts was difficult and in some cases (weak mobile phone versions) utterly impossible. This version has addressed the problem by assigning the action selection to the shoulder buttons and using

The fact is, it's easy to look past this minor control issue. Nostalgia aside, there's still lots more to entertain you. As well as a mass of new 'special' stages, all the levels from the original have been recreated - Fun, Tricky... the works. This means there's literally



hundreds of levels for you to conquer. Well, try to conquer. As you may remember, *Lemmings* is bloody tough once you've made a bit of progress and this is going to be a tough cookie to crack, even for the most hardened gamer, let alone those who just want to dabble. Add to this the level editor that's included and you've got the makings of a fine title that's going to eat up far too much of your time - in a good way.

Also, the multiplayer adds to the package. As well as the classic multiplayer modes, there'll be communities online, all wanting to 'take you down' (sounds menacing, but actually means 'rescue more Lemmings than you') and players will be uploading their created stages to further challenge you. What can we say? Let's go. ■ Rick Porter

It's simply impossible not to enjoy *Lemmings*. **82%**

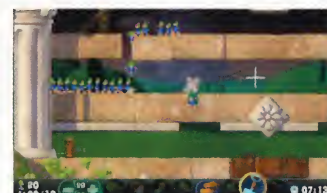
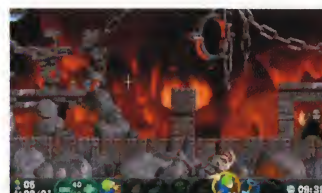
Hey, Mr DJ

Okay, who changed the tunes?

When we think back to times of old and of all the fun we've had with *Lemmings* titles over the years, a couple of things stand out. The main one is the music. The games have always been accompanied by a

certain 'bobbing' soundtrack that added to the giddy frustration of being stuck on a stage and they featured a few familiar ditties such as 'Ten Green Bottles' or the wedding march. Now, however,

these tunes we know and love have been replaced by orchestral tracks that sooth, rather than cause panic. Sure, they work, but we wouldn't mind having the old ones back - it's just not *Lemmings*.





Radical gives Crash a damn good whumping

CRASH TAG TEAM RACING

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Vivendi** / Developer **Radical** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-8** / Supports **Game Share Wi-Fi LAN** multiplayer

THE BIG QUESTIONS

It looks a bit kiddie, are adults going to enjoy this?
The slapstick humour is something you'll love or hate, and given that there's so much belching, splatting and spinning involved, it's more down to your tolerance for cheap gags than your age.

It's racing and platforming, but which one is the core of the gameplay?
The central hub's platforming sections, despite being fairly intricate are really only there to distract you for a while between races.

Crash hasn't had such a great time of it really, being pushed from development pillar to post and respected developers failing to capitalize on the strengths of the franchise. Having found a long term home in Radical, however, perhaps he can blossom at last.

The clearest difference between this and other incarnations is the slapstick humour. Even the loading screens which do verge on the epic at times, give off farting, belching and snorting effects at the touch of a button. Characters have amusing things to say, particularly the 'Mr Tesque' Crunch, and enemies, like the ninja penguins, are as comical as you'll see.

Granted, there's nothing highbrow about any of it, and the whumpa-based storyline isn't exactly mindblowing, but then this is Crash we're talking about.

[Farting, belching and snorting effects at the touch of a button]

You could argue that *CTTR* works better on the PSP than any other format, as it's split up into easily playable chunks of both racing and platforming. The central hub, an abandoned theme park, gives the kind of lightweight platform/puzzle action you expect, requiring you to collect coins, speak to the NPCs, open up new

courses and alter the existing tracks. But despite its expanse, it feels like a sideline, and you'll soon want to get back to racing, which is no bad thing. There's plenty to keep you occupied with a weighty range of vehicles, courses and characters along with the Clash mechanic that, especially in multiplayer, makes for some damn fine fun. Enabling racers to merge together, creating a larger, more powerfully armed car, then being able to split at any moment works tremendously well.

Crash Tag Team Racing isn't your average game and the anti

Crash-ites should, rightly, pay no heed to this title, as it's loaded with all things *Bandicoot*. Under the surface though is a game with longevity, innovation, comedy and fun on a format it's perfectly suited to. ■ **Tom Leclerc**

A return to form for the much maligned bandicoot. 77%



O No wonder you're two-timing Von Clutch, just look at his face. He's uglier than Peter Beardsley after a night on the tiles.

Die Crash, die!

Crash turns death into a collectable

One of the most amusing things about *CTTR* comes in the form of death. Laughing at your own mortality is supposed

to be good for you, so Die-O-Rama should lower your blood pressure a fair bit. Crash is famed for his death

animations, but now you can collect them. Pulling a switch, opening a door or some other such action will often bring about a chucklesome animation of Crash being squashed, sliced, burnt and generally abused in the name of humour. Some are better than others, but it makes for an amusing distraction anyway.





This 49er demonstrates the traditional San Franciscan greeting - from behind.



It's no wonder the Lions are so awful - what's this guy doing?

EA's all-star franchise touches down on PSP

MADDEN NFL 06

OUT: NOW



Publisher **EA** / Developer **In-House** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-2** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer, Wi-Fi internet multiplayer, downloadable content**

Of all the sports to make the transition to the PSP, EA's *Madden* franchise is the most improbable.

In the NFL, after all, big is beautiful. From the colossal frames of hulking linemen to the showy spectacle of the halftime shows, America's most popular sport makes a virtue of extravagance, and from its earliest iterations EA's best-selling series has always been as much about this overblown ceremony as the action out on the gridiron.

Some of this was bound to get lost in translation to Sony's handheld, and while *Madden 06* does an admirable job of bringing

the explosive action of the NFL to this PSP version, the absence of this extraneous hoopla makes it a much less satisfying experience.

Our first game highlighted the problem: ironically enough, the absence of highlights. With archival Denver leading by four, and just 90 seconds left on the clock, our

streaking Randy Moss, who's at the ten... the five... he's in the endzone, and... we've cut straight to the play selection screen for the extra point.

Sure, we think, it's no big deal that there are no replays. And yet somehow it is, rendering the whole *Madden* experience a little hollow, or empty, even soulless.

Madden's first pass onto PSP fall incomplete

Raiders are in do-or-die territory and we're going deep. Quarterback Kerry Collins drops back in the pocket, he evades the pass rush, buying himself a few extra critical seconds, he steadies himself, and - boom! - he's unleashed a rocket downfield to a

Perhaps it seems like a let-down because EA's done an otherwise decent job of cramming *Madden 06* onto UMD. Granted it's lost a little sheen and gloss, but the same phenomenally deep playbooks are here, as is the impressive franchise mode. There's even a *Track And Field*-style Minicamp game.

It's a shame, then, that it's not what's on offer, but what's missing, that sees *Madden's* first pass onto PSP fall incomplete. ■ Jon Clegg



"Hands up or I'll shoot" is a popular phrase in America.

Madden PSP trips agonizingly short of the end zone. 76%

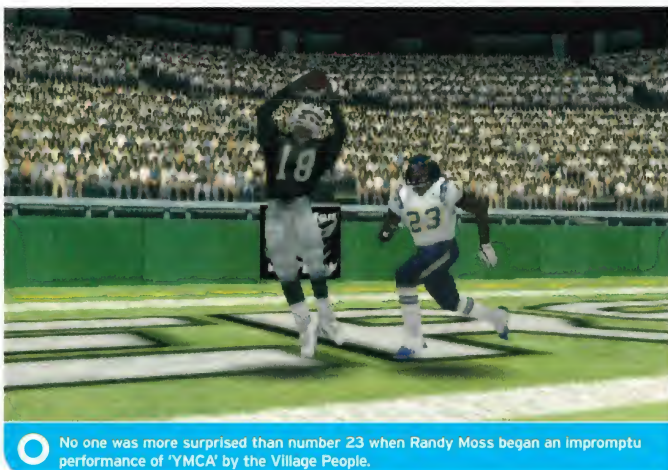
THE Big QUESTIONS ?

Let me guess - just like last year's, but a tiny bit better?

Actually no, since this is *Madden's* debut on PSP. And besides, cramming the game onto UMD means most of the franchise's recent innovations are gone - goodbye Hit Stick, Playmaker controls

and this year's passing cone.

Still it looks great, right? Indeed it does, making great use of the PSP's wonderful widescreen. But with no instant replay, an ill-timed blink means you've missed all the action.



No one was more surprised than number 23 when Randy Moss began an impromptu performance of 'YMCA' by the Village People.

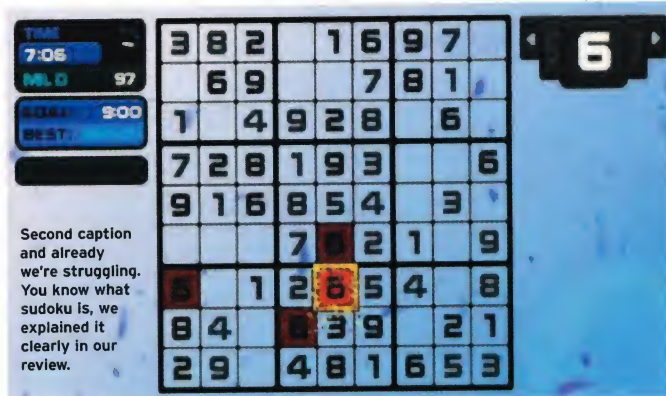
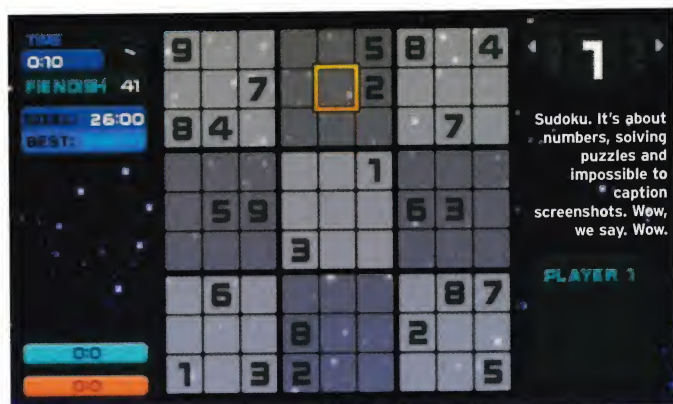
Touchy, touchy

Analogue nub shows off Madden's sensitive side

The PSP's analogue nub has already come in for a lot of stick - it's not a stick, to pinpoint the criticism. Disappointingly, *Madden* also exposes the limitations of the PSP controls.

While controlling players in the open field feels typically smooth, and cutting on a dime to sidestep an oncoming linebacker is as rewarding as ever, passing isn't so much

a test of accuracy as a trial of patience. The nub is far too loose, meaning any attempt to put aftertouch on your throws is likely to see the ball land a long way out of bounds.



Go! Sudoku! COME ON! Sudoku! Yes!

GO! SUDOKU

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Liverpool Studios** /
Developer **Liverpool Studios** /
Price **£19.99** / Players **1-2** /
Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**

THE BIG QUESTIONS ?

So how do you play sudoku?
Sudoku.com says "Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9." Given the site looks like it was designed by blind children, we prefer our explanation.

Does this game look really bad then?
Not really. It has some nice backgrounds and *Sudoku* was never going to be the most visually appealing of games. It's functional, if we're being nice.

You know how you bought your PSP to escape those Daily Mail reader types who play sudoku on the train in an attempt to look intellectual and deep in thought? Guess what! You can now play sudoku on your PSP too! Hurray? Oh dear.

Sudoku explained in five seconds: a nine by nine grid that has a few numbers filled in. You have to fill in the rest of these numbers, making

[You can now play sudoku on your PSP too! Hurray? Oh dear]

sure the same number doesn't appear again in the same line or box. *Sudoku* on PSP explained in five seconds: same thing except you don't need a copy of the Daily Mail to play it. It's better on the PSP because if you make a mistake, you simply get an angry red cross

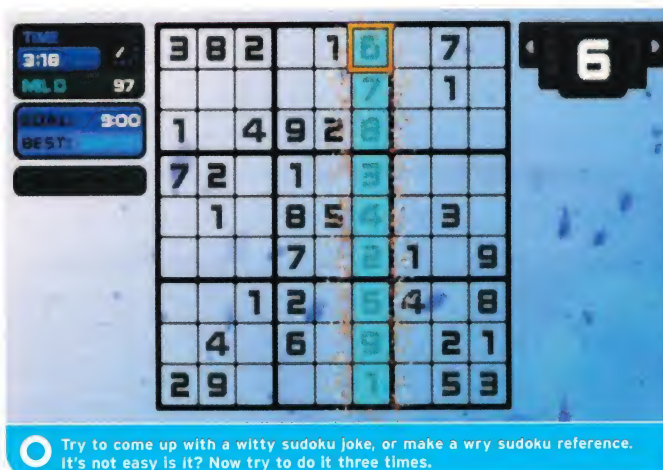
appear on the screen rather than having to scrub out your miscalculated numbers. You also get the benefit of a tutorial that explains everything fairly clearly

The problem with *Go! Sudoku* isn't really the game itself. We're sure the game is great if you're going through a mid-life crisis or love train journeys armed with nothing more than the Daily Mail. Yet it's not the kind of game that

problem. The PSP has a gorgeous screen that displays everything with ice cream smoothness, when all sudoku can do is throw numbers at you. The PSP has Wi-Fi enabling multiplayer battles but *Sudoku* isn't designed for competitive battling. The PSP has an analogue stick, D-Pad and six buttons and *Sudoku* only needs three of them for its slow, sedate and stifling gameplay.

The type of people *Go! Sudoku* will appeal to don't own a PSP, the type of people who own a PSP probably don't want to play sudoku on it and ne'er the twain shall meet. The exclamation mark in the title might try to convince you there's a whiff of excitement about *Go! Sudoku* but don't be fooled - it's every bit as dull as the Daily Mail readers make it look. ■ **Ryan King**

Boring and slow, sudoku is 40% lost outside of newspapers.



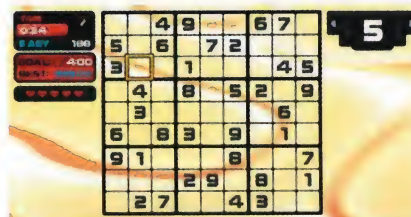
History Lesson

This is as exciting as Sudoku gets

There's not much else to say, so here's a quick history lesson on sudoku, complete with informative facts. Sudoku puzzles

were first published in 1979 but didn't catch on in Japan until 1986 and it took the world until 2005 to cotton.

Informative fact one: In Japanese, the word 'sudoku' implies 'numbers singly'. Fact two: 'Sudoku' is a registered trademark of publisher Nikoli Co. Ltd in Japan, so other Japanese publishers call it 'nanpure', which means 'number place'. Fact three: you'll have as much fun playing the game as you did reading this boxout.





Kao's challenging your patience yet again

KAO CHALLENGERS

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Atari** / Developer **Atari** / Price **£29.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN multiplayer**

THE BIG QUESTIONS (?)

Is multiplayer really that good? Amazingly, yes. There's a wealth of multiplayer modes and unlike the main game itself, they don't make you want to carve the word DEATH into your own eyes.

What's the problem then? The problem with multiplayer is you need someone else to own the game. You see? You need to find another *Kao Changers* owner. Impossible!

Oh, Kao. Why are your adventures so dull? Why do you insist on including every platforming cliché ever, from slippery ice worlds to lava levels? Why do you make me collect 5,000 coins? Why are you so annoying? You could have done more than merely bring the same exploits that graced PS2 to mock laughter over to PSP. It's an exact conversion, packing the same ridiculous "control amazing vehicles" claim (note to Atari: a pelican is not a vehicle) and the same



We're not sure what's going on here, but it's probably not good.

Those expecting a good platformer will be disappointed. Stealth sections, vanishing platforms, moving platforms, stupid plot,

Then something magical happens. You venture into the multiplayer portion of the game and lo! Kao the Kangaroo suddenly realises a life on the dole queue awaits unless he pulls his finger out and suddenly, it's as though Atari starts trying. The multiplayer modes are vast, including a bog standard racing-down-a-slope mode and running around punching other players in a platform deathmatch. There are four other modes slung in too, which make for a pretty nifty multiplayer package. It doesn't deserve to be forced to sit alongside the lazy single-player. It deserves better.

And so, the overall feeling is that of disappointment. Kao really shines in the multiplayer modes but single-player really lets the team down and ensures there won't be too many *Kao Changers* owners around to battle against. Why couldn't you have tried in single-player too, Kao? Why so schizophrenic? Why so little fun in single-player? Why? **Ryan King**

Surprising multiplayer, bad everything else.

55%

[On the negative side, the game itself still sucks]

annoying 'collect 5,000 coins' mechanic. On the plus side, the camera has been vastly improved for this PSP version. On the negative side, the game itself still sucks.

irksome underwater sections; Kao packs in the unwanted baggage from the platforming genre and expects you to be happy with it. There are some cute sections, such as the into-the-screen chase involving a bear that makes stupid noises (we think it's supposed to be growling), but overall, we deserve better for our money. Much, much better.



O Simon Cowell's latest boyband gets together for rehearsals. They're first song, unsurprisingly, will be a cover.

Boss Of Me

The bosses aren't bad

If there's one thing that tries hard to redeem *Kao Changers* in single-player, it's the boss battles. It doesn't quite succeed, of course, because nothing short of an unlockable video clip of Girls Aloud playing

mud volleyball could redeem Kao, but they give it a damn good try. The highlight is the silly octopus thing (for lack of a better term) that Kao fights by riding a torpedo around and eventually crashing into its belly. It's better

than we've made it sound. Also good is the wizard you have to fight with the shields that need taking down - the first platform boss we've fought in a while where we didn't kill him at the first attempt. Good work.

WIDESCREEN

AARON ASADI CHECKS OUT THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST UMD MOVIES



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Your UMD guide at a glance...

- ★★★★★ Excellent
- ★★★★ Must Buy
- ★★★ Average
- ★★ Fair
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Shannon shines as the frat pack gets a bit lazy

WEDDING CRASHERS

OUT: 3 JAN



Director: **David Dobkin** / Starring: **Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn, Isla Fisher** / Price: **£17.99**


★★

Who remembers Shannon from *Home & Away*? Well, she now goes out with Sacha Baron Cohen who rented a house from Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston one summer. Before the break-up, Vaughn and Pitt were mates, so we imagine that helped Shannon from *Home & Away* get the gig in this comedy that lies (but more on that in a minute). There are two forced points to all of this: firstly, it reflects how annoyingly buddy, buddy this film that lies (in a minute) can sometimes be; and secondly that we're happy Hollywood can be so buddy, buddy, as it means Shannon

from *Home & Away* gets to prove how funny she can be.

So yeah, this film lies through it's bleached teeth. What's it about? Three guesses. Go on. Guess. "Well, these two buddies crash weddings to pick up chicks and then hilarity ensues". Wrong. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Wrong. That's the story for the first fifteen minutes. It then turns into *Meet The Parents* as Owen Wilson falls for a pretty girl who also happens to be Christopher Walken's daughter, which also means that Vince Vaughn gets dragged along as Shannon from *Home & Away*'s date. All sorts of seen-it-all-before jokes consequently happen. *Meet The Parents* had the water volleyball, *The Wedding Crashers* has American football. *Meet The Parents* had a smashed urn to make dinnertime funny, *The Wedding Crashers* has



 Vince Vaughn getting jiggy with it and with Aaron's mum, no less.

Shannon from *Home & Away* giving Vince Vaughn a handjob under the table. These shenanigans go on for a little longer than you can probably stomach and end with Wilson not getting the girl immediately as it turns out she's engaged to this psycho rich boy who really knows how to impress Mr Walken. Y'know, a tiny bit like the guy Owen Wilson played in *Meet The Parents*. There's more story tagged on but we can't be bothered

SHOCK FACT!

Wilson's line in *Shanghai Noon*, "I don't know karate, but I know crazy", is from a James Brown song.





to go into it, because a) we're too concerned about ruining it for you, and b) it's only really worth mentioning to say how fantastic Will Ferrell's funeral crasher cameo is.

It isn't, however, all bad. In fact, sometimes *Crashers* is really funny. Scientifically speaking, this is down to the charm of the main players, Vaughn and Wilson, who manage that wonderful thing of knowing exactly what it is they're good for all the time. No one winks like Vaughn and no one can be as lazily cool as Wilson and still be likeable. There are other delights as well - notably Shannon from *Home & Away*, who plays the 'psycho girlfriend from hell' role so perfectly, that you'll wonder both where in the name of Pippa she's been all these years and why Hollywood just sometimes isn't buddy, buddy enough. ■

Soap, fisticuffs, terrorism, insomnia, schizophrenia and some really cool sunglasses

FIGHT CLUB



○ "Hey Brad, should I say something about the end of the film and spoil it for everyone who hasn't seen it yet?" "Everyone's seen *Fight Club*, haven't they?" "Yeah, probably. How are things with Jen... I mean Angelina?"

OUT: 23 JAN



Director: **David Fincher** / Starring: **Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, Meatloaf** / Price: **£21.99**

★★★★★

There was a valid point made against this film once by a man who used to be editor of this very magazine. He said it was the most patronising film he'd seen maybe ever. He thought it was telling him how to live his life and that Ikea was bad. He really liked Ikea and wasn't going to stop shopping there just because this film tried to make the point that masculinity had somehow been lost in our commercial world. It's also hard to

take lessons on vanity from a film with a dolled-up Brad Pitt as the star. A valid point, but then again, there'll be a bad reflection in Brad Pitt's mirror before we're convinced this is anything but grotesquely brilliant cinema.

First and foremost, it's a comedy. Ed Norton plays an insomniac who goes to support groups to ease his woes. This then leads on to him getting involved in a fight club and then consequently becoming part of a neo-fascist social terrorist clan. Whichever way you cut it, that's funny stuff. Mix that up with a chunk of irony, cool lines, good fight scenes, pitch-perfect photography and you know you're on to a winner. The manner in which director Fincher segues all these elements together to make them seem so naturally suited and never forced or contrived is a feat of modern filmmaking. This is sexy stuff from the get go and so deliciously watchable we're actually going to put it on as soon as we get to the 350 word count mark on this review. How can we

This is sexy stuff from the get go

do that quickly and without seeming cheap though, that's the question? Maybe if we just describe some aspects of the film and say how great they are: the horrific comedy of Lou taking on Tyler in the fight club is as good a scene as Fincher will ever make; the manner in which the film coolly turns into a thriller without you knowing it; the post-modern subliminal Tyler shots; the soundtrack; the opening shot; the closing shot... well, that will pretty much do it. We're off to watch *Fight Club*. ■



□ Sexy, entertaining and yours for £21.99. *Fight Club*, we mean.

SHOCK FACT!

Director David Fincher shot over 1,500 reels of film - more than three times the normal amount



Exquisitely
made stuff
and arguably
Verhoeven's
greatest film

Part man, part machine, all genius. No, really...

ROBOCOP

OUT: 9 JAN



Director: **Paul Verhoeven** / Starring:
Peter Weller, Kurtwood Smith,
Nancy Allen / Price: **£17.99**

★★★★★

You know that kid who just pisses about in class, making jokes and having fun, but when it comes to test results he scores annoyingly high? Well, that's *Robocop*. Genuinely. This is a film that most will just watch as a kick-ass action movie about a basically-dead police officer who's turned into a robotic cop - and so they should - but it's also really clever. Seriously;

academics are writing essays on this film all the time. Apparently when the bad robot, ED-209, falls down the stairs, despite being ridiculously powerful, it shows nature's superiority over technology or something. And the newsflashes throughout the movie... word is they are actually a commentary on our increasingly paranoid and tech-dependent society. It's true.

Of course, though, this isn't what makes *Robocop* great - it's only part of it. Another part would be the extreme violence that's just so over-the-top you're not sure whether to laugh or wretch. And the score... heroic, bold and without question one of the most underrated of all

time. The look of the film is perfectly measured too, maintaining a cold, hard and emotionless feel throughout, but doing so with all the pizzazz and shimmer of any modern comic book movie. It's exquisitely made stuff and arguably Verhoeven's greatest film.

You judge a cop by his arrests though, so it's important that *Robocop's* set pieces are up to snuff - which they are. The graphic demolition of Murphy pre-cyborg is hideously exciting, the scene that sees Robocop take on a whole gang of criminals in a warehouse is immensely cool, whilst the magnificently plotted final act will have you wondering just what the hell happened with *Robocop 2* and did the makers of the TV series even bother watching the film? Full of villains you'll be desperate to see get theirs and heroes who don't get away scot-free either, *Robocop* is uncompromising in where and how the bullets and explosions are dished out. It's a powerhouse movie that knows exactly when to be funny and when to be serious, when to slow down and when to blow shit up. They don't make movies like this anymore, and truth be told, we're not even sure they could. ■

SHOCK FACT!

The point-of-view shots from *Robocop* include references to MS-DOS.

ED-209: Great at making things dead, but useless at climbing steps. Loser!



5 OF THE
BEST
UMDS STILL
OUT



[1] RESERVOIR DOGS

Gruesomely funny stuff from Tarantino in the film that launched his career, and consequently a whole age of cinema. The heist gone wrong movie has many great things about it, but few better than Michael Madsen's performance as the cop-torturing psycho, Mr Blond.



[2] BAD SANTA

It's out of season now, but is still probably one of the best Christmas movies to come along since *Scrooged*. Billy Bob Thornton is perfectly cast as the lead curmudgeon, while the bitter dialogue and sheer realism of the film only add to a genuinely heartfelt climax. Good stuff.

[3] AKIRA

People often moan about how his makes little sense, especially toward the end, but in truth it's not anywhere near as impenetrable as its reputation makes out, but is every bit as cool. The most famous and successful anime of all time and deservedly so. Tremendous fun with wicked bikes to boot.



[4] THE FIFTH ELEMENT

A stylish and perfectly enjoyable future-based thriller that while having its fair share of flaws, is still as watchable as it is vibrant. Bruce Willis is typical in the former-special agent role, but that's by far and away the least imaginative thing on show here.

[5] KILL BILL: VOLUME 1

A terrific martial arts movie from start to end/middle. Doing what he does best, Tarantino somehow turns what is essentially terrible cinema into a thing of excellence. Wonderful choreography and a central performance from Uma Thurman that's good enough for three Oscars.

Ghosts, whispering and who knew Donnie Wahlberg could act?!

THE SIXTH SENSE

OUT: 21 JAN



Director: **M Night Shyamalan** /
Starring: **Bruce Willis, Toni Collette,**
Haley Joel Osment / Price: **£18.99**

★★★★★

People were conned into thinking this Haley Joel kid could act well. There's a difference between being a superb actor and not being an annoying kid, so while old Haley lies somewhere in the middle of all this, the truth is he conned us all into thinking he could act by just whispering a lot. That, however, is our only gripe with Shyamalan's debut, and, to be honest, it's not even really a gripe.



the crowds like a good chilling horror, and this one was mega-popular times a million. Justly so as well.

Restrained performances throughout - with Toni Collette excellent as the mother of our affected hero - expertly shot and perfectly paced, *The Sixth Sense* effortlessly creates and maintains an atmosphere where you believe that these strange things may happen,

[Comes from nowhere and stays a part of movie folklore forever]

The twist-laden story of a young boy being able to see dead people and reluctantly enlisting the help of a quiet psychiatrist, played by Bruce Willis, to get him through it, is just one of those films that comes from nowhere and stays a part of movie folklore forever. Nothing draws in

but crucially it develops it as well. The premise, unlike so many other supernatural 'thrillers', actually has somewhere to go, and it's this that keeps you hooked. It doesn't ever peter out or meander, and while the twist may be ever-so-slightly superfluous to the main plot, it adds an undeniable level of mystique to the film, while also underlining the enviable craftsmanship that's on show. ■

SHOCK FACT!



M Night Shyamalan pitched the film as a cross between *The Exorcist* and *Ordinary People*.



□ "Bruce, as well as seeing dead people, I see dead careers and Alex Ferguson's is just over there by the stairs. It's saying 'I hate Jose' over and over."



OUT: 9 JAN

RONIN

Director: **John Frankenheimer** / Starring: **Robert De Niro,**
Jean Reno, Sean Bean / Price: **£17.99** ★★★★★

OKAY HERE'S a weird one: this film's got a terrific performance from De Niro, some excellent car chases, a CIA-involved espionage plot and yet it *wasn't* made in the Seventies. Go figure.

Anyway, enough of that, let's just enjoy this film for what it is - one of the best gritty, spy thrillers of

the Nineties. Former government agents get asked to retrieve a briefcase. There's your plot. Now add a layer of mystery, plenty of can-you-trust-them characters, a lot of double-crossing, bullets that hurt and some of the best automobile action you WILL EVER SEE. It's shallow and not quite as cool as it wants to

be, but this is about as solid a film of this ilk as you'll see that side of *Bourne Supremacy* and this side of *The French Connection*. If that's not a strong enough recommendation for you, then perhaps you should just go back to your XXX marathon and let the grown-ups watch the real films. Oooh, bitch. ■



OUT: 30 JAN

AMERICAN HISTORY X

Director: **Tony Kaye** / Starring: **Ed Norton, Ed Furlong,**
Elliott Gould / Price: **£17.99** ★★★★★

THERE'S A SCENE in this film, that takes place on a basketball court, that is so perfectly manipulative it actually makes you want to cheer for the white supremacists. Obviously, this feeling doesn't last, but it's a testament to the technique behind this sensitive portrayal of a neo-Nazi trying to

go straight that it exists at all.

Ed Norton plays the one seeking redemption and we doubt that he will ever put in a better performance. He is thrilling to watch and without him, it's unlikely that the film would feel as weighty as it does. Still, that's not to take

anything away from the well-developed and well-structured story or the importance of the morality within it. Kudos to any film that takes on contemporary racism and doesn't feel preachy or overblown. It is a tough film, but one which serves its politics and medium very well indeed. ■



"I am a teapot short and stout. Here's my handle..."

Three times a charm? That would be a 'no'.

BLADE TRINITY

OUT: 30 JAN



Director: **David Goyer** / Starring: **Wesley Snipes, Ryan Reynolds, Jessica Biel** / Price: **£18.99**

★★

Blade II was one of the best action movies of the past decade. That's not an opinion either - that's a fact. We read it in a science textbook. *Blade* was pretty good as well. *Blade: Trinity*, however, rather ironically, sucks. Please allow us to explain why...

Blade II was all about Blade being cool on his own. His allies were either dead or not his allies. The odds were against him and that's how we like it, because, let's face it, there's not much better than seeing a martial arts ass-kicker like Snipes take out a room of people who look like they need it. *Blade: Trinity* is about Blade making friends with some teenagers who help him out in his time of need, resulting in two horrible things: a) Blade's not alone anymore and b) our ace vampire-slaying franchise has



somehow turned into a vehicle for Ryan Reynolds one liners, Jessica Biel's iPod (seriously), and the TV show they hope to launch from this.

There's still the odd bit of Blade taking out vampires in that effortlessly cool way of his, and the action isn't altogether atrocious by any means, but it's just not *Blade* anymore - it feels like a really long MTV short you see at the awards ceremonies just before they announce the winner of the Best Snog award. To top it off, the film also has the worst performance of Dracula we've ever seen - and we've seen *Dracula 3000*. Yeah, that's right, *Dracula 3000*. ■



OUT: 9 JAN

THE LONGEST YARD

Director: **Peter Segal** / Starring: **Adam Sandler, Chris Rock, Nelly** / Price: **£17.99**

★★

THIS HERE is a remake of Burt Reynolds' *Mean Machine*, a film that didn't know whether it was a prison drama or a comedy. There has been a remake of it before. It starred Vinnie Jones and was embarrassing. This isn't anywhere near as embarrassing but that certainly doesn't mean it's any good. The prisoners-versus-guards American football game that the plot revolves around is as clichéd and rehearsed as you'd expect, while the events beforehand feel like you've seen them all before, which, of course, you probably have. The problem is that it's reliant on Sandler and Rock to be funny throughout, and despite their best intentions, they rarely are. Not worth it by any stretch of the imagination. ■



OUT: 9 JAN

STEALTH

Director: **Rob Cohen** / Starring: **Jamie Foxx, Josh Lucas, Jessica Biel** / Price: **£17.99**

★

WE'RE ABOUT to tell you the plot of this dire flick, after which you have to guess at what point Jessica Biel manages to show off her bikini: a government-made super plane that can think goes crazy and the top pilots in the force (Foxx, Lucas and Biel) go after it.

Any guesses? No? Well, that's because your mind couldn't possibly be as cynical as the producers' of this movie. Somehow Biel ends up in need of a wash while on their mission and so gets semi-naked for the camera. Even though it's a slight point, it's really all you need to know about the film. It's as by-the-numbers as you can imagine and as ridiculous as it sounds. ■



OUT: 30 JAN

SPAWN

Director: **Mark Dippé** / Starring: **Michael Jai White, Martin Sheen, John Leguizamo** / Price: **£17.99**

★

FANBOYS WERE left reeling after this comic book adaptation was first released. Based on the hugely popular Todd 'Overrated' McFarlane comic of the same name, it's difficult to see how it could have gone any other way though. Y'see, the comic's a mess and so is the movie. It's about a soldier who sells his soul to see his wife one more time and then ends up as a monster from hell with a cool cape and non-descript powers in a demonic war. His main nemesis in this film is The Clown who turns into a demon called The Violator, which leads to some of the most forgettable action sequences and poor CG you will ever see. Horrific. ■

TOP FIVE BEST-SELLERS



[1] FANTASTIC FOUR

The superhero flick still rides high in the charts despite being merely watchable. Just.



[2] LITTLE BRITAIN

The first season of the sketch show that really is just that - a sketch show.



[3] EXTRAS

Gervais' new comedy. Not as good as *The Office*. Well, d'uh. Great stuff though.



[4] ROBOTS

We guess the CG just shows off the PSP's screen really well.



[5] FAMILY GUY: STEWIE GRIFFIN THE UNTOLD STORY

The excellent show gets an okay feature film that does quite well in the charts.

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH

FINAL DESTINATION

Release Date: 30 January

A fate-tempting horror that is nearly as average as it sounds, but only nearly.

FINAL DESTINATION 2

Release Date: 30 January

See above, but exchange the word 'nearly' for 'nowhere near' and you'll have some idea.

WOLF CREEK

Release Date: 16 January

Sort of based on a true story outbreak horror flick. Not as good as it is temporarily interesting.

LORDS OF DOGTOWN

Release Date: 16 January

A movie based on the popular documentary. As needless as it sounds.

THE CELL

Release Date: 30 January

Crazy J-Lo-starring in-the-mind-of-a-killer (literally) thriller. Poor but stylish.

Mobile Games

01 **Medieval Combat**
play 49

Medieval Combat is a 3D action game set in a medieval fantasy world. You'll fight a variety of monsters and bosses, and you'll need to use your sword and shield to survive. The game is available on all mobile phones.

02 **2005 Real Football**
play 43

2005 Real Football is a football game that lets you play as one of the top teams in the world. You'll manage your team, make tactical decisions, and score goals. The game is available on all mobile phones.

03 **Midnight Pool**
play 39

Midnight Pool is a pool game that lets you play against a computer opponent. You'll need to use your cue stick to sink the balls and win the game. The game is available on all mobile phones.

04 **Four Four Two Trivia Quiz**
play 44

Four Four Two Trivia Quiz is a trivia game that tests your knowledge of a wide range of topics. You'll need to answer questions correctly to win. The game is available on all mobile phones.

05 **Splinter Cell Chaos Theory**
play 41

Splinter Cell Chaos Theory is a stealth action game that lets you play as Sam Fisher. You'll need to use your skills to infiltrate enemy bases and complete missions. The game is available on all mobile phones.

06 **Asphalt Urban GT**
play 36

Asphalt Urban GT is a racing game that lets you race through the streets of a city. You'll need to use your driving skills to win. The game is available on all mobile phones.

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COLDPLAY LIVE 2003

Going back to the start

OUT: 23 JAN

Price: **£17.99** / Rating: **N/A**

★★★★

SHOCK FACT!

Coldplay co-headlined their first tour with Terri, which is the best thing Terri have ever done.



Gyrating at the front of the stage, part bandy-legged morris dancer, part deranged somnambulist, Chris Martin makes for compelling viewing in this 90 minute recording taken from Coldplay's 2003 World Tour. And not just because his interpretation of dancing is so utterly

excruciating that it's impossible to avert your gaze for a second.

Rather, this footage from the band's dates at Sydney's Horden Pavillion exquisitely captures that moment in time when Coldplay reached the zenith of their effortless rise to the top, when the 'Play were at the very point of transforming from a student outfit into paid-up member of the stadium league.

As such, though this is a set played in front of a capacity crowd of adoring fans, it doesn't feel like the bloated, distant performance you'd get from them now. There are no worthy admonishments from Martin about world poverty or free trade here, nor any glimpse of Gwyneth and the celebrity trappings in which their frontman became ensnared. There isn't even a hint of the disappointment that X&Y would bring.

Nope, the only sensation this 17-song set is likely to evoke is a palpable sense of energy, a violent

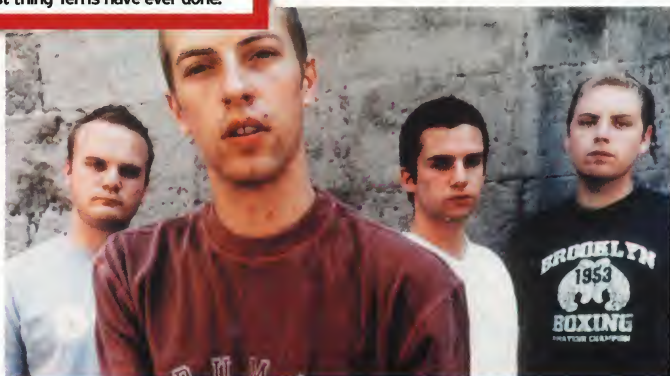


□ This is Coldplay at their best, before they went all rubbishy and stuff.

wave of sonic oomph from a band that know they're about to explode, and are relishing every second of the journey.

From the clanging opening of 'Politik' to virtuoso renditions of 'Daylight', the triumphant bursts of 'Clocks', and the overwhelming power of The 'Scientist', this is an outpouring of raw emotion in an expansive wall of sound.

Never mind that the 40-minute tour diary is an exercise in ennui, all lingering shots of nothing very much. Instead, revel in this celebration of a band bursting into the stratosphere. **■ Jon Clegg**



□ Luckily, the Coldplay guys had all brushed their teeth. Otherwise, they'd be all 'Yellow' and if their mums saw, they might get into "Trouble". Ahem.

Talkin bout an evolution

GOLDFRAPP: WONDERFUL ELECTRIC

OUT: NOW



Price: £17.99 / Rating: Exempt

★★★



Alison Goldfrapp doing her thing is always a sight worth seeing.

With critics slaving all over this year's offering, *Supernature*, it seems fitting to look back at Goldfrapp's evolution with this UMD release. Showcasing two separate live performances spread out over 18 months, *Wonderful Electric* charts the progression of the band's double act, vocalist Alison Goldfrapp and producer Will Gregory. And there's been quite some progress.

From the Sergio Leone-inspired 'Felt Mountain', a multi-layered masterpiece comprising elements of electronica, trip-hop and folk, and imbued with creepy studio atmospherics by Gregory's tempered production, to 2003's dance-heavy 'Black Cherry', highlighted by Goldfrapp's enigmatic, sexually-charged vocals, few groups manage

to reinvent themselves so successfully in a lifetime. That Goldfrapp did it in a year and a half is nothing short of astonishing, especially given that they followed up these two albums with this year's tour de force.

If their live shows haven't evolved quite so sharply in that time, that's because Goldfrapp's alluring performances elicit a similar reaction whatever the venue - a hushed silence quickly descends as the aloof chanteuse meanders her way through the dizzying highs of these captivating performances. And if *Wonderful Electric* won't quite have you on the edge of your seat, with highlights as hypnotic as 'Utopia', 'Strict Machine', and the irresistible 'Horse Tears', watching the duo sidestep musical genres with such effortless ease is never less than a pleasure. ■ Jon Clegg

SHOCK FACT!



Alison Goldfrapp featured on Tricky's 1995 debut, *Maxinquaye*, while she was still in college.



It would be a little immature to make a sexist comment about this screenshot of a young lady on a bed, but we think we might have just implied it anyway. Oh dear.



OUT: NOW

VANS WARPED TOUR 2003

Price: £12.99 / Rating: 15 ★★★

THE OPENING

sequence sees a bare-chested fan perform a spectacular swan dive off the stage, and that tells you pretty much all you need to know about the Warped Tour, a kind of travelling circus for the US underground. It wants so much to be seen as a rough, raw festival of old school punk rock, and yet you can't escape the feeling that you've seen it all a hundred times before.

That said, there are enough highlights on here to warrant closer inspection, even if most of the pop-punk acts on show here appear to owe more to Blink-182 and Sum 41 than The Sex Pistols or The Clash.

An acoustic set from Thrice and an eager rendition of 'Ape Dos Mil' from Glassjaw provide early highlights, though it's The Ataris who eclipse the rest of the lineup,

with a virtuoso performance of their winning anthem 'So Long Astoria'.

If the remainder of the bands are best described as identikit, it's worth noting that this is a genuinely portable slice of punk rock, with the collection of brief performances well-suited to intermittent viewing, making this a better purchase on UMD than the DVD release. ■ Jon Clegg



OUT: NOW

BUSTA RYMES: EVERYTHING REMAINS RAW

Price: £12.99 / Rating: 15 ★★★

HAVING BURST onto the hip-hop scene on the back of a unique voice and an edgy, raw style, there's something slightly incongruous about finding Busta Rhymes on a smoothly-produced, neatly-packaged UMD. And it's no surprise to find that

the glossy sheen and polished edges of this recording only serve to undermine the visceral power of Rhymes' lyrics, if not their frenetic pace.

Nevertheless, this package contains all you'd expect - an energetic performance from Rhymes, with

lively renditions of some his best songs.

This just passes as an introduction to his up-tempo party hits, but underlines a move away from the creative wordplay and controversial subject matter of his early career, and is mostly disheartening. ■ JC

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SOLUTION

PURSUIT FORCE

TIME TO LAY DOWN THE LAW

HINTS & TIPS

Catching criminals isn't all that easy.
So take note of these pointers to help
You stop the villains in their tracks...





O You've lost your Justice Meter and your points. Not clever.

Driving

When you're driving a car or boat, it's important to avoid civilian traffic. Not only does hitting traffic slow you down but, unless you're on a bike, it will count as a Lawbreaker, reducing your Justice Meter and costing you points. Of course, if your meter is empty, as at the start of a mission, this is not an issue except for the lost points. Also take opportunities to ram any criminals' vehicles that you wish to capture. This won't damage yours or their vehicles significantly, but it will gain you a Brute Force bonus to your Justice Meter. This can allow you to do a Justice Shot jump when you capture, which is a lot safer.



O Small movements are the best way to control things here.

Heli-Gunning

The helicopter sections are quite difficult. The helicopter and the targets are all moving very quickly and the targets are often small. Use the analogue nub for control, and only move it a small amount to avoid overshooting the targets. A side effect is that it's quite easy to incur Friendly Fire penalties. You don't need to worry about these too much, as you can recover your Justice Meter by eliminating the targets. It's easier to stop firing briefly to avoid shooting a civilian vehicle, instead of moving the gun. Lastly, be careful not to let your gun overheat as the time lost from letting it cool down fully is more than that lost from stopping firing briefly. You'll know your gun is overheating, as the temperature bar fills, the barrel turns red and the gun will fire more erratically.



O This is the fastest way to take out another car. It's also a pretty good technique for getting a lift if you're a hitchhiker too.

Capturing

Try to capture vehicles with a full Justice Meter, because the Justice Shot makes dealing with passengers that bit easier. If you don't have a full Justice Meter, then instead of hiding, you should try to kill the criminals in the vehicle as quickly as you possibly can, especially if you have a powerful weapon.

The first benefit of this is that the combo bonuses will allow your Justice Meter to build up more quickly. Secondly, since time is at a premium - especially in later levels - you cannot afford to spend it hiding. Also time spent in the same car recharges your health anyway. However, if you have a weak weapon (during a Convict's mission, for example), hiding is a good idea.

Remember that you can capture motorbikes without combat, which makes them a good choice if you're wanting to build up your Justice Meter.



O Extra points and a nice new gun are coming your way if you don't kill the bad guys.

On Foot

In a lot of on-foot sections there's no time limit and no need to rush. Your health recharges, so in these missions find some cover to recuperate, saving your Justice Meter for when wounded and surrounded or for driving stages. It's a good idea to arrest enemies instead of killing them - this requires you to get up close, so plan ahead. Not only do you earn more points, you can also take their gun. If they have a machine gun this makes the level a lot simpler.

FINAL ADVICE

Perhaps most importantly, when driving, capturing, on foot or in the helicopter, concentrate your fire on one target. It's better to remove one person from shooting at you than to split your fire between targets while they all cause you damage.



O Don't be distracted - finish the one you're targeting first.

THE CAPELLI FAMILY CONTINUED



SOLUTION

GENERAL HINTS

The Capellis have the easiest cars to drive. They are quite average, not being especially fast or weak. The Capellis use Equalizer machine guns and the powerful Revolver. The Equalizer is an excellent weapon, as it can clear a car full of mobsters as you jump across. The Revolver, while slow, is very powerful, making it good for dealing with boss missions.



○ Choose your car and weapon according to the mission you're on.



○ Guns don't kill people, bad drivers in cars do.

THE CAPELLI FAMILY

MISSION 1: RAT RACE

RANK REQUIRED: OFFICER

As this is an escort mission, with Joey Leone in your passenger seat, you can't swap cars. Your car will be rapidly chewed up by the mobsters' guns, and you can't steal a weapon that's better than your pistol, so you'll have to drive tactically. First, make sure you stay well ahead of the indestructible chase car. Weave between the other traffic, using it as cover,

especially while you reload your weapon, and try to make the mob cars crash into the traffic. Thirdly, remember that filling your Justice Meter and pressing **○** will refill your health, so keep your Justice Meter up and wait till your health is almost gone before using it.



○ You can't shoot him, so put your foot down!



○ Low health, but a full Justice Meter? You'd best press **○** and then watch your health fill up. Glorious, glorious health.

MISSION 2: COLD CONTRACT

RANK REQUIRED: OFFICER

The easiest mission so far. Your aim is to take out the speedboats. Your first priority is to swap your wimpy handgun for the more powerful weapons of the enemy, so speed to the first boat and take it over, granting you an Equalizer. It's

much easier to capture vehicles than to shoot them on this level, so simply jump your way up the convoy of speedboats, killing the crew as you do. This should also fill up your Justice Meter quickly, enabling you to fire at the crew while you are jumping. Once you capture the seventh and final boat, it's mission complete.



○ Once you've captured a new weapon, stealing boats will be a piece of cake.



○ Jump onto enemy boats and steal weapons.





○ Take it easy, then speed up to keep in the blue (top bar).



○ Don't let them rest on your head for too long.

MISSION 3: LINE OF FIRE RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

The first section of the mission requires you to catch up with 'Deadeye' De Tomaso. Once you catch up with the mob convoy, keep your distance. The meter at the top of the screen shows how far away you are. Keep in the blue areas to keep close enough to tail them, but not so close as to alert them. The convoy will go through several ninety-degree turns, so it's easy to get too close or to lose them, so go gently through the bends, then burn up to the convoy again. When they catch the mayor's car, you need to keep him alive until the timer runs out.

Destroying the mob sedan helps, as does keeping yourself between De Tomaso and the mayor.

When the time runs out, the final section starts. Chase De Tomaso in his speedboat and kill him. Keep jumping into the mob boats to pick up their weapons. De Tomaso will try to snipe you, so keep out of his sight. Destroy the boat before he leaves the city to finish the level.

MISSION 4: WITNESS PROTECTION RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

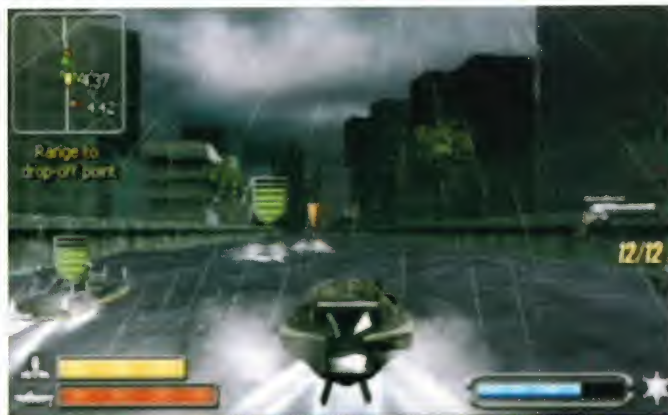
This is a two-part mission. First you must escort three FBI boats in your speedboat. Your convoy will



○ The enemy won't come around here, so take time to recover. When you're fully recharged, you can go back to kicking backside.



○ Get the cars at point-blank range in the tunnel. That'll give the best advantage possible and you'll also get to feel a bit sneaky.



○ Take the front boat first, as it's easy to let the rear one overshoot. Remember to keep close to the FBI boats all through this section.

come under attack from pairs of Capelli speedboats as you make your way up river. At first, they will come from the same direction, but later on they will try to catch you in a pincer movement. When this happens, you should go for the boats in front first, as they're easier to get near. Stay close to the FBI boats and this section shouldn't be too difficult.

Once you drop off the convoy, you are ambushed at the docks. There are 12 enemies in total, coming in three waves. When the last wave attacks, you can take cover to recover health behind a large crate. As long as you don't rush out, this section is quite easy.

MISSION 5: LEGAL EAGLE RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

This is a three-part mission, covering heli-gunning, driving and on-foot shooting. You start in the helicopter. You have to destroy all seven cars in the lawyer's convoy within five kilometres, so get shooting! Ignore their rockets, as eliminating the cars will build up your Justice Meter enough to recharge. Near the start, you go through a tunnel, bringing you next to the cars. Use this chance to destroy them quickly.

Once the convoy is destroyed, you'll drop onto the lawyer's car. His driver will attempt to kill you



○ Try to keep to the sides to avoid mini-gun fire.

with an Equalizer, so hide from his fire, then gun him down and take the car. Do this quickly, as there's an indestructible chase car. Race to the lawyer's house with the Capelli cars chasing: shoot at them and ram them to build up your Justice Meter so you can recharge your car's health.

Lastly, you need to clear 14 mob soldiers from the house grounds. You don't have much time, so move quickly. Arrest a few to take their guns and simply shoot the rest, again using your Justice Meter to recharge, as there is no time to rest.

MISSION 6: DON THE RUN RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

A deceptively simple mission. Simply catch up with the Don's limo before he gets away and waste him. At the start it looks like you have a lot of time to complete this mission, but the Don's car is very tough, very far away and very well guarded by seven cars full of mobsters. The car limo itself is guarded by two mobsters and a mini-gun in the boot. To start with, capture your way up the escort of mob cars. There are five saloons, each containing two mobsters with Equalizers, and more sports cars join the chase, each containing a mobster with a Revolver. Take care of all of these cars, then chase after the Don, shooting at him and changing cars when yours is too damaged. You can only hurt the Don when he stands out of the sunroof, after you shoot the door guards, so keep level! If your health drops too low, use your Justice Meter to recharge - or capture another car, as the mob sports cars appear regularly.

SOLUTION

GENERAL HINTS

As a military gang, the Warlords' vehicles are slow but tough. If you have to chase somebody, a Warlords' vehicle is not the best thing to capture. Both of the Warlords' weapons: the AGP 5 and Shotgun, are good to use. The Shotgun is powerful enough to kill any person in two shots, while the AGP 5 is powerful and fast-firing enough to clear a full vehicle in one jump.



○ Slow but tough is a videogame cliché, but we love it.



○ Slow but tough is a videogame cliché, but we love it.

THE WARLORDS

MISSION 1: TOXIC CONVOY

RANK REQUIRED: OFFICER

For this mission, you are required to capture the transport vehicles without damaging the toxic gas tanks, so whatever you do, don't shoot them! The crew of the transporters are all carrying AGP 5 assault rifles, which are very handy for taking out the crew. However, it's risky driving a transport, as it can get damaged, so for moving up the convoy, take one of the Warlords' escort vehicles instead. These are armed with Shotguns which, while powerful, fire slowly. When you get near the last warlord vehicles, they will begin to release the toxic gas behind them, so try to get alongside quickly: the gas damages you, not your vehicle.



○ However tempted you are, DON'T SHOOT IT! Trust us, we've tried and we know it's not good. No, really, don't shoot it. Please.

MISSION 2:

HARDWARE HIJACK

RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

This mission is split into three parts. In the first section you have two minutes to get to the docks. Three Warlord jeeps try to stop you. They're quite easy to capture, as they don't try to shake you off. Watch out for the sharp right turn about 500m before the docks.

In the docks you have to fight on foot through ten Warlords. They're quite easy to take down at first, as you should have a weapon from the last jeep you captured. However, once the ammo is gone you'll need to use your pistol.

Lastly, you chase down six boats carrying the cargo. Be careful going through bridges, as hitting the central support makes the mission impossible to finish. Also, a helicopter dropping bombs will attack you. Avoid

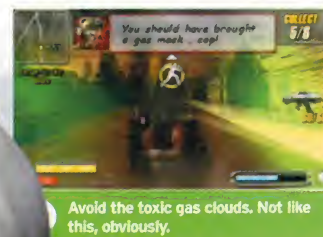
the bombs if possible, but you can capture another boat, so don't steer too wildly to dodge.

MISSION 3: ATOMIC AMBUSH

RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

This is quite a long, three-part mission. Your mission starts in a jeep, escorting the nuclear warhead and two jeeps. After the cut-scene, enemy cars will attack. Your first priority should be to capture an enemy jeep, as your pistol is nowhere near powerful enough to fight off or capture the Warlords' B-101 APCs easily. Once you have a more powerful weapon, it's fairly simple to capture enemy vehicles. Be careful, however: the road is very winding, so you need to watch your balance.

Once you arrive at the base, you have to fight the Warlords on foot. There are 16 Warlords, in groups of four. When each group appears, try not to move up the stage until the current four are dealt with, as this will cause the next group to



○ Avoid the toxic gas clouds. Not like this, obviously.



○ Brake early to make it around this corner. Otherwise, you'll crash.





O You can't shoot it down, so dodge if you can. They'll be plenty of chances to blow up helicopters later on in the game.

appear. Four at a time is a challenge; eight is suicide!

Finally, Lieutenant Davis steals the warhead. Give chase, but watch out for his backup cars and the helicopter that drops bombs on you. Davis also fires gas grenades, which drain your health and cause vehicle damage. Keep capturing enemy vehicles to avoid exploding, and keep ammunition in the AGP 5 assault rifles you take.

MISSION 4: VELOCITY

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

In this homage to the movie *Speed*, you have to get on a bus and save the passengers from the bomb on board. You start on a motorbike. Go as fast as you can towards the bus on your map. The bus will explode when it reaches the town, so hurry up! Once you reach the bus, jump on, then walk up the roof to the front. When you take over the bus, the bomb timer appears. Starting on ten seconds, the timer drops each time your speed drops below a hundred.

A police jeep will come up to catch the passengers. Drive on the right edge of the road, keeping the jeep level with the front-left of the bus. The jeep can only hold four people and there are 16 passengers on the bus. Keep the bus steady, and the speed as slow as you can, so that there is enough time to get all of the passengers off the bus.

MISSION 5:

DAY OF THE DAM

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

You start this mission in the helicopter, chasing the Warlords' boats. They have rocket launchers, which damage your helicopter, but not you. Aim for the centre of the boats where the crew are, as this is where they're weakest. When there's 500m left, the helicopter's fuel line will be damaged and you'll have to move onto the boats, so destroy as many as you can first. You should have destroyed at least three boats by this point, to have given yourself a good chance.



O Get on the bus quickly, and try not to overshoot. Failure here will lead to a whole busload of crispy travellers. That's not a good thing.



O Quickly capture one of these to upgrade your weapon.



O These bombs will take your car's health; be ready to jump.



O Keep to the right to avoid the traffic. Keep on the left to end up in the river. Keep in the middle to crash into as many other vehicles as possible.

Once on the boats, you'll have to move forwards quickly. Use the time you spend catching up with boats to recover your health, and ram boats whenever possible to build up your Justice Meter, as a Justice Shot is the best way to take these boats over. When there are only two enemy boats remain, overtake the rear boat and take out the front one, then capture the last boat as it passes you.

MISSION 6:

GENERAL'S REVENGE

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

Capture the two escort boats to keep them out of your hair, then

race on to catch the General's boat. His boat will drop mines, then fire mortars, then launch homing missiles. To avoid them, stay close to the front or sides of his boat and fire at him. Escort boats will attack you, so capture these to aid your health and keep them away. Only use your Justice Meter to recharge your health.



O Hit them in the centre to destroy them more quickly.



O If you stay close, those mortars won't hit you. Remember, it's wise to keep your friends close and your enemies closer.

GENERAL HINTS

Like the Capelli Family, the Convicts' vehicles are all quite average. They're fairly tough and also quite fast. The Convicts' weapons are perhaps the most troublesome in the game. The Sawn-Off is powerful enough to kill in two shots, but reloads very slowly. On the plus side, the Convicts in cars have to reload often as well, giving you time to eliminate them. The Nail Hammer fires slowly and is quite weak. Its only advantage is a large magazine, which means that Convicts in cars with one never have to reload, making them very dangerous.



The Nail Hammer doesn't need to reload, so it's pretty dangerous.



The sawn-off shotgun is powerful, but slow reloading.

THE CONVICTS

MISSION 1: SKI RUN RAMPAGE

RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

The first section requires you to tear towards the ski resort in your police car. You don't have much time, so take care on corners, as messing them up can really slow you down. Don't be tempted to commandeer another car, as you're driving the fastest thing there. Once you reach the resort, the Convicts are attacking civilians. There are three cars being harassed, so chase them down and take out the Convicts. The quickest way is to capture the vehicles, but this will cause the gang to turn their attention from the civilians to you! The Convicts are carrying Nail Hammers and Sawn-Offs.

The last car has two cars of criminals after him. By this point your health may be shaky, so it may be worth shooting at one of



Finish these Convicts before they finish the civilian. Otherwise, you'll have the guilt of an innocent's death on your hands, you evil git.

the cars instead, unless your Justice Meter is high enough to do a Justice Shot. Lastly, there are four cars heading for the border, so chase them and finish them off. You may be quite close to the end of the road now, so capture the Convicts' vehicles to save time.

MISSION 2: RAPID REACTION

RANK REQUIRED: SERGEANT

This is a very straightforward mission: simply take out the eight Convict boats before they reach the city limits. The river winds a lot at the start of the stage, so be careful. Also, watch out for Convicts attempting to jump onto your boat. If this happens, shoot them quickly, as they can take down your health very fast.

Once again, capturing your way up to the convoy of boats is the way to go.



This is much faster than just shooting at the enemy cars.



If you don't shoot him soon, he'll kill you in three seconds.

MISSION 3: WILDE'S BOYS

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

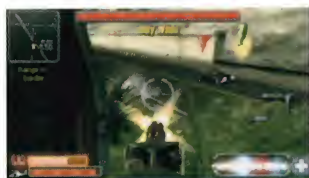
To complete the first part of this mission, you need to eliminate all six cars in the convoy. You don't have a lot of time here, so don't take too long destroying the cars. If a Convict jumps onto your car, you can afford to leave it, as you don't need to kill those Convicts to complete the mission. Also, any car with three Convicts in is very dangerous.

If you kill all the Convicts, you transfer to the heli-gun. You have to kill Billy Wilde in the distance allowed. When he's in a car this is fairly easy, but when the car is destroyed he'll jump onto the top



Take out the cars quickly; you can't afford any mistakes.





Keep an eye on Billy Wilde. You can survive a few firebombs.



Once you're in here, you can't leave for the whole mission.



Dodge around these. Hit one and you may as well restart.



Keeping your balance is very tricky in this section.



Keep your car straight until he's knocked out. To check that he's properly unconscious, tickle his feet and if he doesn't smile, he's out. Maybe.

of another car and throw bombs at you. Aim directly at him here so that you can destroy the bombs as he throws them. If you have to follow them too much, you'll lose time. Eventually he'll drive the car, so shoot it while your health recovers. Keep shooting as he changes cars, to finish the mission.

MISSION 4: THE FORGER

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

Hijack the Convicts' sports car, then drive to the airport to pick up the forger. Simply take out the two escort cars and take over the sports car before you arrive at the airport. It's best to take out the escorts first, as once you've taken the sports car you can't leave. Once you've picked up the forger, you have to make the 20km back to the city. There is an indestructible chase car, and you'll be harried by Convict cars and bikes. Keep shooting at the Convict vehicles and any Convicts who try to board your car, using your Justice Meter to regain health.

Occasionally the forger will wake up and attempt to gain control of the car, so try to keep it on the road until you can subdue him.

MISSION 5:

A SNITCH IN TIME

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

For this mission, you need to pick up the snitch and get him back to the city. Firstly, you must chase down and destroy three Convicts' cars before they reach the Convicts' hideout. This is a relatively simple section, but the road winds a lot, so you need to keep your balance when capturing cars. At the hideout, you need to take out the 16 Convicts. There is no time limit, so take the time to recharge your health before dealing with the them in small groups. There's a wall, which you can hide behind.

Lastly, you have to drive the snitch back to the city. There's a chase car, and a lot of Convicts will attack you, so put your foot down

and keep shooting to top up your Justice Meter. They're keen on jumping on your car in this level, so be ready to shoot them off.

MISSION 6:

BUS TO THE BORDER

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

The first section of this mission sees you racing to the border in your Jeep. There are no enemies here, but you only have 55 seconds, so hurry. Don't hit any cars. When you reach the town, there are lots of wrecked cars littered around. Dodge those and try to make the very tight 90-degree turns. The first two are signposted, but the next right and left are not, so be careful.

When you reach the end of the town, Hard Balls' bus appears with two escorts. Shoot out one escort and capture the other, then fire at Hard Balls. If a Convict jumps onto your car,

capture another, if you can, as they won't be any trouble in your old vehicle. When Hard Balls is injured enough, he'll call in another escort. Capture this, then shoot the prisoners who appear in the bus, then Hard Balls again. Keep repeating this loop until you eventually bring him down.



Let him have your car. You can always take it back later anyway. It'll make you feel like a double-hard bastard as well, which is always a good thing.



Duck behind here if you need a breather.



GENERAL HINTS

The Vixens' vehicles are fast but very weak, so when you are driving one be ready to capture another vehicle quickly when your car's health becomes too low. Both of the Vixens' weapons - the Chain Pistol and the Chrome Gun are weaker than most other gangs' weapons but fire very quickly, so they're useful for capturing vehicles.



O Fast but weak - another videogame cliché we just can't resist.



O You won't be able to stay in a Vixens' car for long.

THE VIXENS

MISSION 1:

DAYLIGHT ARCHAEOLOGY

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

This mission takes you on the road and the river. To start, you need to protect three police cars from the Vixens. The first is being menaced by a single VMV, so capture that and pick up a Chrome Gun. Then move to the next car. Be careful, because the road splits several times, with the targets going to the right each time. This next car is being chased by two bikes and a sports car, the last is being attacked by a sports car and a VMV. When the cars are taken out, you have to jump onto two boats. Be careful: when you capture as the



O Follow them to the right or you'll lose opportunities! Lost opportunities are not good. If someone else finds them, you might not get them back.



O Oh, the glory of fishing in a weapon-enhanced speedboat.



O Take over the boats before they get away from the road.

drivers will shoot at you too! Once they're captured, take out the last six Vixen boats to finish the stage. You'll meet first one, then two, then three boats. The boats are fragile, so capture them quickly!

MISSION 2: A TEST OF METAL

RANK REQUIRED: LIEUTENANT

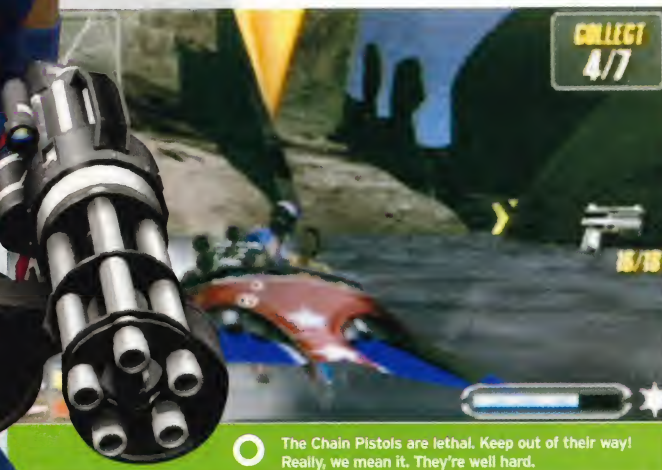
As it's made clear in the briefing to this mission, do NOT sink the target boats. The first two boats you encounter have escorts. Capture the escorts first, take their weapons and to stop them from damaging the target boats when you capture them.

Once you've captured the first two boats, you'll come under fire from a helicopter. You can shoot this down for bonus points, stopping it shooting you. The drivers and passengers on this level are very aggressive and fire at you often, so you'll have to use your dodge.

MISSION 3: FOX HUNT

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

You need to lure The Fox into the chief's cunning trap. You start driving a truck. Vixens will attack you in sports cars, so fire at them, using your Justice Meter to recharge your health when needed. If you get too close, the passenger will jump onto your



O The Chain Pistols are lethal. Keep out of their way! Really, we mean it. They're well hard.



O Shake her off before she reaches your cab and shoots you!



O Get the helicopter while it's hovering for maximum damage.

truck, requiring you to weave dangerously to throw them off, making you more likely to hit civilian traffic. Keep your distance.

When The Fox appears, capture the cars in her escort and chase her, firing at her as you go. When you damage her to about half she'll get in a helicopter. The helicopter drops bombs while flying too far ahead to be shot at, so wait for it to slow down and reload to blast it. Vixens' vehicles will come up from behind and catch you in a crossfire, so be ready to capture these to keep your vehicle damage healthy.

MISSION 4:

BABES, BOATS AND BULLETS

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

There are three trucks and four boats to capture in this mission. You begin in your car, in hot pursuit of the stolen trucks. To capture a truck, you need to jump onto the back, then walk along to

the cab and shoot the Vixens in there. Try to jump on as close to the cab as possible to make your walk shorter. Also beware of Vixens with guns on the bonnet, who will shoot at you. There are Vixens on motorbikes and in sports cars escorting the trucks, so take these faster cars to move up the convoy.

Once you have the last truck, jump on a boat to continue the river chase. There are the four boats and one Vixens' boat escorting. Capture all the boats in time to finish the mission.

MISSION 5: GIRL'S BEST FRIEND

RANK REQUIRED: MAJOR

You have to recover the diamonds being carried by nine Vixens' vehicles. The first batch of diamonds is being carried on a bike; the others are in sports cars and VMVs. There are also two escort bikes and an escort car. The Vixens take a lot of short cuts in this level, which are hard to spot, except on the map, so be on your guard. With about 5km left you'll come under fire from a helicopter. Shoot it down with your gun quickly, although capturing new cars also works well. The last three Vixens' cars are all in one group, so jump across them, which should build up your Justice Meter in no time.

MISSION 6: WHIPLASH

RANK REQUIRED: MAJOR

You start off in your Jeep. You need to chase down Whiplash. She's just ahead of you, so catch her up and start shooting at her car. Her driver will shoot you, and she'll try to hit you with her whip. The whip disables your car's



O Shoot her quickly before she causes too much damage. Teach her the error of her ways with a little bit of bullet-shaped justice.



O Look out, or you'll lose the Vixens for a while! They're pretty damned speedy and they won't wait around for you to catch up!

electrics, making it hard to control. She'll also whip other cars, causing them to veer in front of you. Keep shooting as she jumps from car to car, capturing other cars and using your Justice Meter to keep your health up.

When she's taken damage Whiplash jumps into her helicopter. The helicopter will face you and fire rockets. It's indestructible

when it does this, so veer across the road to dodge them. The helicopter then turns side-on to you, to fire grenades. Whiplash is vulnerable here, so shoot at her while she's exposed. Don't worry about your health, as there's a steady stream of Vixens' cars. Try to capture them when the helicopter is firing rockets so you don't miss your chance to shoot.



O Your Enforcer will work wonders on this chopper. Go on, just point, aim and squeeze the trigger. The cathartic effect of shooting down a chopper is unrivalled.



O The electric whip will make you lose control for a short while, so be ready to control your vehicle when it happens.

SOLUTION

GENERAL HINTS

These are the hardest missions. The Killer 66's cars are fast, but are quite hard to drive. If you hit another car, you could lose the mission while you try to regain control. The SMG 7 and the Punisher handgun are the best weapons to use. The SMG 7 is an excellent weapon on foot and in a car, as it carries a lot of ammunition and can clear a full car of enemies in one Justice Shot jump. The Punisher is quite powerful, but inconvenient. It takes four shots to kill a standing Killer 66, and its rate of fire is too slow to make it useful against vehicles. It does have a lot of bullets, but otherwise your own handgun is superior.



Killer 66 weapons are powerful, but not the most convenient.



KILLER 66

MISSION 1: GUARDIAN

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

This is a three-part mission. The first part is a helicopter-gun section. You have to destroy the convoy before they can reach the Yakuza base. You need to destroy all of the cars within the time limit. One vehicle in the convoy is a motorbike which is quite awkward to hit, so take care here.

When you destroy the convoy, your helicopter will circle the Yakuza base twice before landing. Use this opportunity to shoot some foot soldiers, as this makes the next section easier. You then have to fight your way across the base on foot. Keep moving while shooting; use your Justice Meter to recover your



It's a very small target, so keep your movements small.



Don't try to shoot the bike - let the rider come to you. By taking things on your own terms, you will give yourself a handy advantage.

health if you need to, as there are plenty of targets in here.

Lastly, you must drive the mayor's daughter home. Fire at the vehicles chasing you and any Yakuza who jump onto your car. Beware of the motorbikes: they're very hard to hit, so it's much easier to allow their drivers to board your vehicle and then shoot them.

MISSION 2: THE BIG GAME

RANK REQUIRED: CAPTAIN

Starting on your bike, race towards the stadium. You start in suburbia, with a lot of tight turns, so keep to the verges of the road to avoid the traffic and stay on a good line for the corners. Then go flat out along the straights.

In the stadium, you have to shoot 12 Yakuza on foot. There's no time limit here, so take use cover and make arrests to pick up your score and get new guns.

Next, you have to chase down and capture the three money trucks before they reach the bridge. You can only jump on the

back of each truck, and then walk along. All the trucks have Yakuza on top, guarding them, so be prepared to shoot. The second and third trucks also have escorts. There are lots of sharp corners here, so keep your balance! Also be careful of the road splitting in two. Stay in the right-hand lane with the Yakuza, or they'll gun you down and you can't jump on them.

Lastly, jump into the helicopter to take out the last seven Yakuza cars with your heli-gun. This is straightforward, but watch for the cars going into the flood canal, as bridges will block your line of fire.

MISSION 3: SYNTHETIC SCIENCE

RANK REQUIRED: MAJOR

Starting in a civilian four-wheel drive, you need to catch up with Sudeko's convoy. You only have 25 seconds to do this, so you have to drive perfectly (7). When you reach the convoy, tail them to the drugs factory. This is quite simple, but watch out for the last section of road: this is a wide highway, so the



Keep to the sides to avoid the traffic. Not avoiding traffic would lead to a crash, which is bad.



O The trucks are slow, so quickly switch to another car. But not another truck, because that would just be silly. Especially if it's a slower truck.

convoy picks up speed. When you reach the factory, clear the area of the 15 Yakuza there. You've very little time, so move quickly and use your Justice Meter if you need more health.

Lastly, chase down Sudeko. He'll fire grenades at you and launch clouds of poison gas, which make you lose control. For the first section there are no other cars to capture, so drive safely while firing. When the chase reaches regular roads, Yakuza cars will join in, so you can use these to capture and recharge your Justice Meter. Once you're on the roads, Sudeko is quite easy to take down.

MISSION 4: PURSUIT PLUNDER

RANK REQUIRED: MAJOR

After the last mission, this is somewhat relaxing. Firstly, you have to destroy the Killer 66 convoy and capture their lead car before you reach the base. There is less than 5km, so put your foot down. Capture your way up the convoy. There are only three cars, so you can move quickly. Don't hide from gunfire, as it takes too long and shouldn't kill you. When you get to the base, you need to eliminate the Killer 66 soldiers there. There's no time limit, so take time to plan. However, the base is widely spread out with little cover, so plan your attacks carefully. Lastly, drive the Pursuit car back



O Beholding the dragon is a good thing, we're told.

to town. The road is difficult to follow, but keep driving and shooting and you should be fine.

MISSION 5: RISKY BUSINESS

RANK REQUIRED: MAJOR

As soon as you start this mission, you'll be fired at by a Killer 66 foot soldier in front of you. Deal with him, then head around the corner where four more of his friends are waiting. There are 15 enemies in this section, in three waves. There's no time limit, so relax and take opportunities to recharge your health and perform arrests. When all the Killer 66 soldiers are dealt with, you move to the helicopter. You need to destroy as many of the cars and bikes in the convoy as you can.

With 10km left you'll transfer to a car, so try to destroy as many of the Killer 66 cars as possible before. There are also boats firing at you here, but you don't need to destroy them so it's best to concentrate on the more distant and hard-to-hit cars.



O Take out the enemy boats because you're supposed to.



O Always be aware of your cars strengths and weaknesses.



O You need to turn right very early for this corner, just like our person is doing here. Well done that man! As a reward, he's getting paid this month.



O The gas makes you more likely to hit a grenade. Avoid it! Also, exclamation marks make you look a bit ridiculous and unfunny. Avoid them.

Finally, from the car you need to destroy the rest of the convoy. The first vehicles you encounter have

onto the top of the transport and have to be shot off. Destroy the nearest car quickly so its

[Once you're on the roads, Sudeko is quite easy to take down]

probably been softened up by your helicopter gun, so simply shoot at them. Then make your way up the convoy, capturing vehicles as you go. The last three cars are in one group and hard to capture, so it's wise to shoot two of them instead.

MISSION 6: MONSTER TOSHIMA

RANK REQUIRED:

COMMANDER

This is it: the final mission in the game. Starting in the helicopter, you have to prevent two transporters from a hijacking by the Killer 66. You only have 8km to do this in. The first transporter is being attacked by two cars. Passengers from the cars jump

passengers can't board. The second car is more difficult as it's often behind the transport. The second transporter is being attacked by two cars and two bikes. Again, try to destroy two of the vehicles so that there aren't too many Killer 66 guys jumping onto the transport, as you don't have much time.

Lastly, you transfer to the car to hunt Monster Toshima. He'll fire his flame-thrower at you. If your car is set on fire, swerve around the road to extinguish it while firing at Toshima. More Killer 66 cars will join the chase, so capture them if your health gets too low or you want to top up your Justice Meter. When Toshima dies, it's all over, except for the races and time trials.

SOLUTION

APE ACADEMY

STOP MONKEYING AROUND AND START WINNING WITH THESE EXPERT TIPS FOR ALL THE MINI-GAMES, INCLUDING SPECIAL UNLOCKABLE ONES

RESET TRICK

There is a way of quitting if you're not doing well during an Academy year. Press **UP**, **DOWN**, **SELECT**, **START** (all together) and you will be returned to the title screen (although you will have lost any statues collected). This is handy if you have failed a mini-game needed to get a Specter coin or if you are going for a perfect nine wins – in which case you can use it to keep resetting until you get a range of your favourite mini-games in the grid.



LOOM DASH

OUR RECORD: 00:28



This is really just a test of your reaction speed. As the event starts, have your thumb ready on the \odot button and concentrate on the screen as you wait for the 'Go' signal to be given.

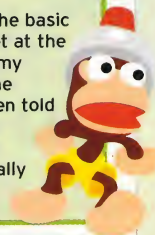


APE THE APE!

OUR RECORD: 6



This is a repeat of the basic training that you get at the beginning of Academy mode. Just press the correct buttons when told to by the instructor and that's about all there is to it. It's really as simple as that.



A ROSE MONSIEUR?

OUR RECORD: 27

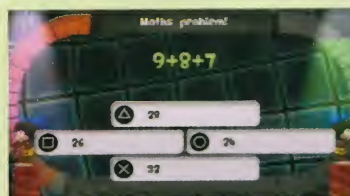


Avoid bumping into any of the monkeys. Stand slightly above or below them and point your rose at them early, moving it to follow them for the best chance of a sale. Blue monkeys are the easiest ones to sell to.



ASK DARWIN PART 1/2/3/4/F

OUR RECORD: 15 (F)



Practise this game and you will see the same questions coming up, so you can memorise them. When it says 'Misfit' at the top, you need to select the odd one out. Also, always note the question number as you will sometimes be asked for this.

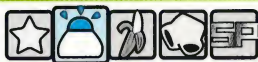


BANANA GUARDIAN

OUR RECORD: 52



Concentrate your fire on the nearest monkeys and watch out for ones that appear from the trees at the bottom - keep firing a few shots down there. Save your banana boomerangs for when a group of monkeys is near.



BOMBERMONKEY

OUR RECORD: 41



Try to catch at least three bombs on your plate before offloading them - it makes life easier. Also, catch the second/third bomb slightly on the side to where you'll be moving next, so it rolls up the stack as you do. Stay well clear of explosions!



ENTER THE MONKEY I

OUR RECORD: 43



Hold \rightarrow to speed up the swing for the longer leaps, but generally try not to land too high on each rope or you will waste time sliding down. Try to land near the bottom of the ropes so you can jump quickly to the next one.



ENTER THE MONKEY II

OUR RECORD: 95



If you press \odot just as your monkey hits the wall he will rebound much higher, leaving ninja shadows. In Academy mode, take refuge in the hollows whenever it flashes red, to avoid being crushed. And obviously, dodge falling hazards.

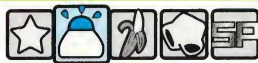


ENTER THE MONKEY III

OUR RECORD: 10



Phase one is easy, as the target monkey is a different colour. The second involves finding the monkey that's out of sync. For the third, you need to concentrate and follow his shadows to see where he finishes up.



GERONIMO

OUR RECORD: 32



Grab some 'chutes at the start. As the monkeys approach, see which side of the central square they're on and move over to it, then adjust your position as they get closer. Hold \downarrow to slow their approach.



SOLUTION



HAMMER THROW

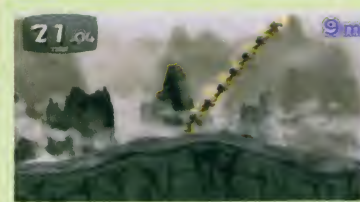
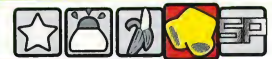
OUR RECORD: 122M



When the game starts, rotate the analogue nub (easier with a finger) to build up the power to maximum, then press \odot to launch the hammer. Just before you land (watch for the ground speeding up), hold \odot for a soft landing.

MONKEY BALANCING

OUR RECORD: 56M



Get your stack at a fairly low angle to the ground (so their hat lights flash yellow), then tap \rightarrow repeatedly, just fast enough to stop them falling over. Press \leftarrow to tilt forward at the start, or if the angle is too high.

KARATE CHIMPSTER

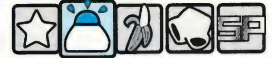
OUR RECORD: 7



We tried all sorts of tactics before stumbling across an incredibly simple one that seems to work every time: just hold \rightarrow and keep hammering the \odot button to punch! You may take a few blows but will eventually knock him over.

MONKEY DODGEBALL

OUR RECORD: 45



A '1' above a monkey indicates that the ball is about to be thrown to him, so get out of the way! The trickiest balls to avoid are those thrown diagonally from corner to corner, so make sure you are all the way over to the left or right.

MONKEY BOWLING

OUR RECORD: 76



In Academy mode, go down the middle with maximum power for the first two lanes. For the rest, move a bit to the right and then put a little left spin on the ball. The latter technique will help you get strikes during practice.

MONKEY FOOTBALL

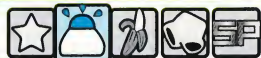
OUR RECORD: 7



Position your keeper to catch the ball, then aim at a 45° or less angle at the top or bottom wall (whichever is nearest) and try to hit the shot with maximum power. Usually, it will bounce off one or two walls to go in the far corner.

MONKEY DRILL 1/2/3/4/5

OUR RECORD: 31 (WE GOT BORED)



There's no point trying to work out the sum straight away, as it keeps changing - wait a few seconds till it has settled down. Also multiplication takes precedence over addition and subtraction, so do any multiplying first.

MONKEY HOCKEY

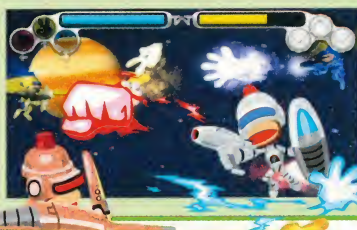
OUR RECORD: 38.14



The key to winning is to guard your goal and not venture too far from it. When you get the chance to smash the puck, hit it diagonally at the top or bottom edge so it ricochets behind your opponent and hopefully into the goal.

MONKEY TECH

OUR RECORD: 4



Time your attacks so they hit your opponent, defend against his, or pause your monkey to avoid attacks. Also, certain combinations have statistically more chance of breaking through: paper-rock, rock-scissors and scissors-paper.

MON QUIXOTE

OUR RECORD: 439



You need accurate shield positioning to deflect arrows within a certain angle range. It's trickiest when arrows come from very different directions and you'll need to move your shield quickly to the nearest ones.

POT SHOTS

OUR RECORD: 31



The main problem is running out of ammo, so hit gun-carrying monkeys to top up and shoot selectively. They're are colour-coded for points: red (three), yellow (two), blue (one). Ones on the top two rows may topple others as they fall.

PIPOTRON TRIO

From Junior Yr 3 onward, this gang can turn up at any time to challenge you at an event - if you fail, you've failed the whole year! They usually turn up for one of the final couple of events, so consider leaving your favourites till last.



MONKEY OLÉ

OUR RECORD: 24



You'll move into the lane of the bull which hits your cape, so if there's another one right behind it, point your cape the other way to avoid this! If the bull in your lane is ahead of the others, rapidly tap Ⓢ to hasten the one heading for your cape.

MONKEY WATCHING

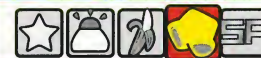
OUR RECORD: 4



The trick to getting it right is to concentrate on the far left of the screen and count them as they first enter. On later levels they also enter from the right, but continue to watch the left edge and also count any that exit on that side.

MORNING JOG

OUR RECORD: 40



This is a repeat of the basic training you get at the start of Academy mode. Just press the correct buttons as they pass under the circle. As with the Red Hot Jig game, the easiest way is to do it in time with the beat of the music.



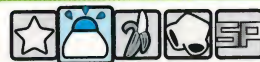
MONKEY STATUES

- To unlock statues in the Showcase, collect figurines or capsules during games in Academy mode.
- Get three coins again after unlocking the Special game in a year and you will be rewarded with another statue.
- You are awarded a Rare statue for winning all nine games in an Academy year.



RED HOT JIG OKL/KOR/ONE

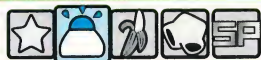
OUR RECORD: 24/63/39



This is a simple case of pushing the correct button or direction as it passes under the circle. The easiest way to get it just right is to do it in time with the beat of the music. Get too many wrong presses and it's game over.

SALVAGE

OUR RECORD: 6



Position the boat so that when the diver is lowered, the currents will take him to the chest. To do this, work backwards (up) from the chest, deciding where the diver needs to be for each current - and to avoid any rocks.

SHISHKEBAB SPECIAL

OUR RECORD: 984



In Academy mode you need to catch the right combination on your skewer. So keep it angled down until the next correct item is thrown up. When practising, you can score bonuses with combos of just fruit, kebabs or sports items.

SIMIAN SUPLEX

OUR RECORD: 4



To beat the first two, aim the analogue nub at where the opponent is in relation to your monkey. For the rest, move up and down the ring and press → on the way up and ← on the way down, to rotate your fist.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

OUR RECORD: 23



To save time moving your monkey around, examine each scroll for errors in turn, from left to right. You never know how many wrong ones there will be, but if you haven't heard the win chime, there must still be at least one left to swat.

STREET JUGGLER

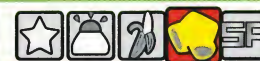
OUR RECORD: 36



The key is to press the button/direction rhythmically, lengthening this as more balls are added. The tricky bit is when a fourth ball is added and two are close together: for these you need to rapidly press ⊙ twice then ← twice.

UFO THROW

OUR RECORD: 136M



Just like the Hammer Throw. Rotate the analogue nub quickly (easier with a finger) to build up the power to maximum, then press ⊙ to launch the UFO. Then, just before you land, hold ⊙ for a soft landing and extra distance.



SPECIAL GAMES

- Each of these is unlocked in the Mini-game Collection by getting all three Specter coins during a particular Ape Academy year and then playing and winning at the special game itself. So read these tips to ensure you get it first time.

Note: you get a brief glimpse of the reverse of the grid squares when they flip over at the start of the year, so you can see where the coins are. If you are just trying to unlock the Special Game and fail a coin square, it is quicker to reset and start again - see (RESET_TRICK) on page 98.

FINAL YEAR

To unlock Senior Yr 3 in Academy mode, you need to get a commendation from the other five teachers - by winning a perfect nine games in each year.



MONKEY DICE

OUR RECORD: 10



Don't wait to be told which button to press: hit if your number is equal to or greater than his; if it is lower. Later, prepare to defend a lot more - particularly when you reach the one holding two dice!

UNLOCKED IN
Junior
Yr 1

GRAN TURISMONKEY

OUR RECORD: 12.22

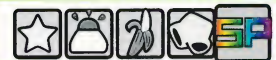


There isn't a lot to this mini-game. Just hit the button rapidly to wash the car. Watch the Shininess meter closely: whenever it stops moving, press to switch your position and continue washing.

UNLOCKED IN
Junior
Yr 2

CHEF CHIMPY

OUR RECORD: 29



Serve the customers in the order they arrive, except for those who only want a Raw Banana - serve them first as they're more impatient. If you are unsure who to serve next, watch for any monkeys banging on the table!

UNLOCKED IN
Junior
Yr 3

EVERY MONKEY'S GOLF

OUR RECORD: 46

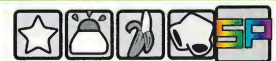


Aim high up the bank. If you can manage to get the ball into the top of the red device, numerous balls are released to score loads of points! You have to be very precise to get it in the blue ten-point hole.

UNLOCKED IN
Senior
Yr 1

MONKAVISION

OUR RECORD: 620



After blasting a few asteroids or avoiding them, the UFO appears on the left, so get over there. Keep shooting it to bring it down and to avoid its tractor beam (a special noise indicates it's about to fire it).

UNLOCKED IN
Senior
Yr 2

Beat the world, but don't tell them how you did it...

CHEATS & TIPS

Star Wars: Battlefront II

CHEAT CODES

In Single-Player mode, pause the game to enter these codes. A sound will confirm correct entry.

INFINITE AMMO:

↑, ↓, ←, ↓x2, ←, ↓x2, ←, ↓x3, ←, →

INVINCIBILITY:

↑x3, ←, ↓x3, ←, ↑x3, ←, →

SLOW DOWN GAMEPLAY

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

FLIP TO UPSIDE-DOWN VIEW

↓x3, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓

FLIP BACK TO NORMAL VIEW

↓x3, ↑x2, →, ↓, ↓

PLAY CREDITS (HOLD X TO SPEED THEM UP)

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

RUDE DRIVERS

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

TRAFFIC LIGHTS ARE ALWAYS GREEN

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

CHANGE TO CLEAR WEATHER

↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

CHANGE TO FOGGY WEATHER

↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

CHANGE TO OVERCAST WEATHER

↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

CHANGE TO RAINY WEATHER

↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

CHANGE TO SUNNY WEATHER

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

SUPER-HUGE HEADS

↓x3, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓

PEDESTRIANS FOLLOW YOU

↓x3, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓

PEDESTRIANS BEGIN TO ATTACK YOU

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓

PEDESTRIANS ARE ALL ARMED

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓

PEDESTRIANS START A RIOT

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↓



X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse

CHEAT CODES

Enter the following codes in the Review menu.

UNLOCK ALL COMICS:

→, ←x2, →, ↑x2, →, START

UNLOCK ALL CINEMATICS:

←, →x2, ←, ↓x2, ←, START



GTA: Liberty City Stories

CHEAT CODES

Enter these codes during play. A message will confirm correct entry.

Warning: Entering these cheats can affect your saved game. If you use them, it's best to remove any memory stick first.

GET \$250,000

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

GET ARMOUR

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

GET HEALTH

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

GET WEAKEST WEAPONS

↑, ↓x2, ↓, ←, ↓x2, →

GET MEDIUM WEAPONS

↑, ↓x2, ↓, ←, ↓x2, →

GET STRONGEST WEAPONS

↑, ↓x2, ↓, ←, ↓x2, →

INCREASE YOUR MEDIA RATING

↓, ↑, →, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

INCREASE YOUR WANTED LEVEL

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

CHANGE TONI INTO RANDOM PEDESTRIAN

↓x2, ←, ↓x2, →, ↓, ↓

DIE

↓, ↓, ←, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

GENERATE RHINO AT YOUR LOCATION

↓x2, ←, ↓x2, →, ↓, ↓

GENERATE TRASHMASTER AT YOUR LOCATION

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

SHINY CHROME VEHICLES

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

ALL CARS ARE BLACK

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

ALL CARS ARE WHITE

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

AMPHIBIOUS CARS

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

MINI-WHEELS FOR BIKES

↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

ALL VEHICLES HAVE LIGHT HANDLING

↓, ↑, ←, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

MAKE ALL NEARBY CARS EXPLODE

↓x2, ←, ↓x2, →, ↓, ↓

TURN OFF WANTED LEVEL

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

SPEED UP GAME CLOCK

↓x2, ←, ↓x2, →, ↓, ↓

SPEED UP GAMEPLAY

↓x2, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓x2

MediEvil: Resurrection

CHEAT MENU

Pause the game, hold R2 and press ↓, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓x2, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↓, ↓, A. Cheats option will be

added to the pause menu, giving you access to Invulnerability and Gain All Weapons.



Virtua Tennis: World Tour

CHEAT CODES

On the main menu, hold R2 while entering the following codes. A noise will confirm correct entry. Re-enter a code to disable it.

→, ←, →x2, ↑x3

All racquets and clothing available (on Home screen)

↑, ↓, ←, ↓, ↓x3

Begin World Tour mode with \$1,000,000

↑, ↓, →, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

Earn \$2,000 every week in World Tour mode

↑, ↓, ←, →, ↓, ←x3

Sepia mode

↑, ↓, ←, →, ↓x3

Unlock all stadiums

↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓

Unlock the King and Queen players



Need For Speed: Most Wanted

CHEAT CODE

Start a new game and enter your name as either **!bacon** or **!get-set**. You'll get \$100,000 and all the cop cars in Tuner Takedown will be available.



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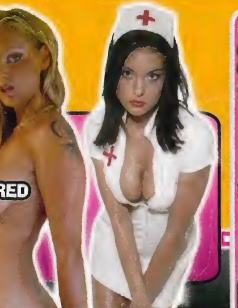
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IF YOU thought the opening few months of the PSP's life were exciting, just wait till the new year. By March there'll be over 300 movie and TV UMDs available and the next generation of game releases is just around the corner as well. The only way to keep up with the pace is to make sure you get a fix of **go>PLAY** every month, and the only way to be sure of doing that is to get yourself a subscription. Not only does it mean you get the mag delivered right to your door the very day it goes on sale, but you can also save yourself a few quid into the bargain!

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A6 instruction form

CONNECT

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PLAYSTATION PORTABLE



YESTERDAY'S

Because sometimes, you just want to go back in time and relive the 'golden age' of gaming.

Walk into a games shop and what do you see? Shelves brimming with PSP games, that's what. And while a good few of those are genuinely worth your time and money, there's a substantial amount that only a moron would hand over thirty notes for. But what many people don't know is that

the PSP is an absolute powerhouse when it comes to 'extra-curricular activity' - running programs that Sony perhaps didn't realise or want the world to know about. But we know now. The homebrew scene is massive today, ranging from little shareware-esque games developed in bedrooms around the world, to what we're looking at here -



GAMES TODAY

emulators that allow you to play not only the best games on the market today on your PSP but the very finest from years gone by as well.

In layman's terms, an emulator is a program designed to mimic the procedures and hardware of an older console. The main drawback to emulation is that it takes quite a bit of power to do properly -

GBA emulators for 8-bit machines like the Spectrum and C64 were about as far as it could be pushed on Nintendo's little handheld but with the processing power of the PSP, it goes without saying that the potential for emulation on the device is absolutely gigantic. Already, the handheld emulation scene is blossoming, giving us portable

retro experiences that we'd never imagined. You can play *Super Mario Kart* at work, have a blast at *Super Metroid* on the bus and the potential for what can be done grows larger by the day. But for now, we're just going to concentrate on what can be done at the moment, how to do it and what the best software is to help you get your retro fix.



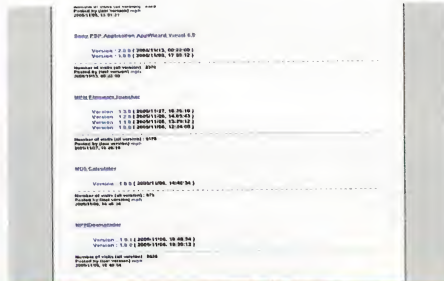
STEP 1

STEP 1:

Before you even think about running emulators on your PSP, you'll need to be aware of which firmware version you're running. If you've been playing the most recent games like *GTA: Liberty City Stories*, chances are you've moved onto a newer version and that won't help your chances of going retro. Indeed, if you've upgraded beyond version 2.0, you won't be able to run any homebrew software for now. But with the situation changing every single day and new progress being made in running such software on more recent versions, it's probably only a matter of time before even the most recent firmware is worked around. Regardless, to check which versions you have, boot up your PSP and choose 'System Settings' followed by 'System Information' - If you're running 1.5, skip the next few steps. 2.0 users, read on.

STEP 2:

Time to round up the required software. Jump on a PC and head over to www.chez.com/mph to get the

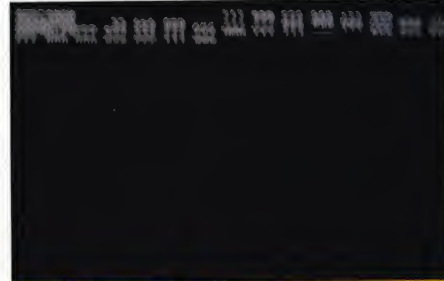


STEP 2

program MPHDowngrader - you'll also need a copy of the original 1.5 upgrade (called EBOOT_1.5.zip, 13.2Mb) but make sure you get it from a reliable source as the Trojan that can cause your PSP to become unusable is still out there. When you've got both files, unzip EBOOT_1.5.zip. Then hook up your PSP using a USB cable and create a folder called 'update' in the `psp/game/` directory, placing the unzipped file EBOOT_1.5.pbp inside.

STEP 3:

Now for the next zip file. Unpackage `mphdowngrader.zip` and you should get three files that you need. Place `h.bin` and `index.dat` on the root of your memory stick and put `overflow.tif` in the `psp/photo/` folder. Now comes the scary bit. Make sure your machine is more or less fully charged and plug in the power lead, starting up your machine without a UMD in the drive. Browse the photos on your PSP until you reach the newly added `overflow.tif` - you'll know when you get to it as rather than display a



STEP 3

picture, the screen will freeze on a black screen with some white text.

STEP 4:

Power down the PSP completely. Then reboot and go all the way right to Game then Memory Stick and hit \times to start the 1.5 update. When it finishes, you'll be given an error message saying that the update failed but don't worry - it didn't. Turn off your PSP again and restart it. Another scary bit now, as when the machine restarts, you'll get a lovely multi-language error screen that looks far worse than it actually is. All you need to do is hit the \odot button here and initial settings will be restored to no ill effect. Reboot your machine once more and you will be running version 1.5.

STEP 5:

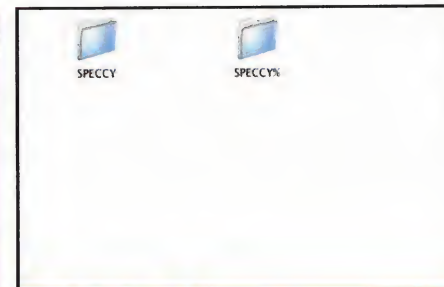
The rest is pretty much plain sailing. Simply download whatever emulator you wish to use (again, being careful to avoid that nasty Trojan) - some homebrew programs are already set up to run under 1.5 while



STEP 4



STEP 5



STEP 6

SYSTEM SHOCK – A GUIDE TO PSP FIRMWARE

With Sony putting out new firmware updates for the PSP on a seemingly hourly basis, it can be pretty confusing trying to work out which does what. Some add useful extra features while others shut down the PSP's ability to run homebrew software such as emulators - which version you run should

really depend on what you use your PSP for most. New games often now ship with updated firmware that they require in order to run, a clever tactic to encourage mass updates and get around the exploitable features of earlier firmware versions. But what exactly has changed with each version?





STEP 7

others will need you to download kxploit1.5. This converts EBOOT.pbp files to work under 1.5 and needs to be used on older homebrew programs.

STEP 6:

When you've got what you want, it's time to hook up the USB cable again. Navigate through to your psp/game/ directory again and create two folders that relate to your program, the second of which should be followed by a %. If, for example, you get a Spectrum emulator, you'd need to make folders called SPECCY and SPECCY% - the first should contain the original EBOOT.pbp file, while the one followed by the per cent sign will need to take the modified version of the file. Any ROMs or other files should always be placed in the non-% folder with the original program. If you downloaded a 1.5 ready version, it should already have this file structure set up when you unzip it, so just copy the folders across accordingly.

STEP 7:

Disconnect your PSP from the PC and go right to 'Game' again. You'll notice a few corrupted files but these are nothing to worry about. Simply select the program you wish to run and go for it. Have fun with your old games!

Disclaimer: goPLAY takes no responsibility for damage caused to your PSP while using this method. We tried it with complete success but there have been reports of people having problems with it - unsurprising given that this is not in any way condoned by Sony and all programs used have been developed by the PSP community.



Emulation: Is It Legal?



The exact dos and don'ts of emulation make for something of a grey area. In a nutshell, emulating another system isn't illegal in itself but using these programs to run commercial releases is. But as the years roll on, more and more classic games are allowed to slip into the public domain - if a developer/publisher doesn't mind an older game being freely available (when, for example, there's no more profit to be made from an old game), it can legally be distributed online. Less legal, however, is sharing ROM files of any other commercially-released title. *The Sonic The Hedgehog* series, for example, is still making money for Sega through compilation packs and the like

so, therefore, such ROMs being freely available online is theoretically harming profits for the company.

Even within the legal spectrum, there are plenty of great games that can be enjoyed and it only takes a couple of minutes trawling the net to find some of these for yourself. Be it home-coded software or abandonware (older titles that have been deemed legally distributable by their owners), there are plenty of titles available if you're looking to stay totally out of reach of the long arm of the law. The usual targets for prosecution tend to be websites that offer ROMs en masse rather than individual users but there's only one way to avoid getting into trouble for sure - stick with the legal stuff. It's your call.





BEST OF THE BEST...

FORMAT: MEGADRIIVE

Console Released: 1989 Best Emulator: DGen 1.0

Fondly remembered as one of Sega's greatest gaming triumphs and with good reason, the Mega Drive has just about everything you could want from a console. A wide spread of games covering just about every base imaginable, the Mega Drive (called the Genesis in America, if that helps in your searches) was one of the most versatile machines of its day and if you're after a good variety of games, you needn't look any further than *Sonic's* rightful home. Most emulators will now run Genesis games at full speed with sound, making the retro gaming experience all but perfect. The controller's three buttons are easily mapped onto the face buttons of the PSP (can be tricky if you try and use the six button version) and overall, this is probably the best place to start for emulation.

THREE OF THE BEST

Sonic The Hedgehog 2



○ Forget about the 3-D abominations - classic speedy ring-snatching action from yesteryear.

Shining Force 2



○ Strategy RPG fare that still humbles most of today's finest additions to the genre.

Micro Machines 2



○ Racing games don't get any better than Supersonic's shrunk top-down masterpiece.

BEST OF THE BEST...

FORMAT: SNES

Console Released: 1991 Best Emulator: SNES9x PSP 0.02

The fanboys rally around the Super Nintendo like with no other console and while claims of its being the best system there ever was might be somewhat inflated, there can be no denying that the games available for it were top notch. As the home of Squaresoft in the 16-bit days, expect plenty of the best RPGs ever made as well as countless first-party titles which, as is still more or less true today, have that Nintendo polish that can't be found elsewhere. Emulators are now pretty much up to speed (especially if they allow for overclocking the handheld's CPU) and the controller couldn't be more similar to the PSP's layout, making playing all those all SNES games on the move an absolute breeze. With thousands of massive games out there for you to play, what are you even waiting for?



THREE OF THE BEST

Chrono Trigger



○ One of the greatest RPGs ever, period. A timeless classic.

Super Mario All-Stars



○ Collect coins, jump a lot, rescue princess. Textbook. All the platform love you could ever want.

Street Fighter 2



○ There have been better versions since but the original brawler still has its charms.

BEST OF THE BEST...

FORMAT: PC ENGINE

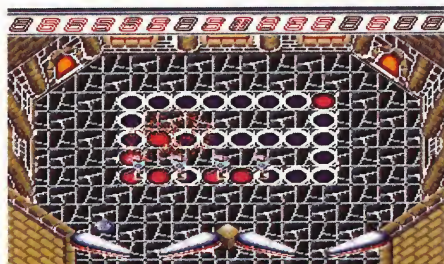
Console Released: 1989 Best Emulator: PCEP 0.7

Nothing to do with personal computers, the PC Engine is probably the best console you've never heard of. Unless you've never heard of the SNES. Or the Mega Drive. But we digress. Technically in line with the Master System or even the NES, the technical prowess of the PC Engine meant that it was far closer to later 16-bit machines - with great visuals and an interesting spread of games that you've quite possibly never heard of, this is a great place to start for the more seasoned retro gamer that wants to try something new. Simple controls and relatively basic coding mean that the PSP has no trouble whatsoever running the likes of *Out Run* and *Chase HQ* in their lesser known but often superior home versions.



THREE OF THE BEST

Devil Crash



Pinball in game form. Pretty much the definitive console silver ball experience.

R-Type



Perfect side-scrolling shooter that remains as playable and enjoyable today as it ever was.

Bonk's Adventure



Everyone loves kids with massive heads, right? A strange name for a remarkably normal game.



BEST OF THE BEST...

FORMAT: GAME BOY COLOR

Console Released: 1998 Best Emulator: RIN 1.32

Going back to the Game Boy Color might not be the obvious choice but when you've got access to over ten years' worth of portable games just crying out to be played, why the hell not? Rudimentary visuals often disguise absolutely essential handheld titles - the likes of *Pokémon*, *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy* stand up perfectly well today and can be enjoyed anywhere. Like with the PC Engine, the relative simplicity of the Game Boy make it simple to emulate for the PSP without having to overclock the processor. The sheer amount of games on offer makes this a particularly tasty choice - with so many out there, you're bound to find something you like. And if not, you can always just pick something a little newer and bide your time until the much-touted GBA emulators start to roll out...

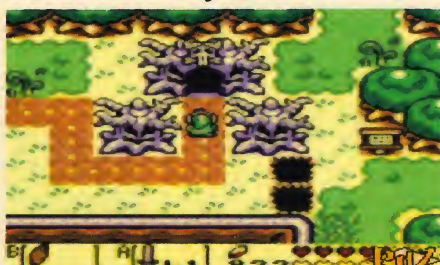
THREE OF THE BEST

Tetris



Sure, Lumines is great but little can compare to this classic puzzler. Watch the hours just disappear.

The Legend Of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX



An enhanced version of one of Link's greatest adventures to date? Sounds good to us.

Dragon Warrior Monsters



An interesting and original RPG, where breeding creatures leads to almost infinite possibilities.

TOP 10 WI-FI GAMES

WEREN'T YOU EVER told not to play with yourself in public? Fortunately Sony's handheld is Wi-Fi enabled, which means multiplayer action at the flick of a switch. Spread the love.

BURNOUT LEGENDS



Forget the fact that the single-player mode is bedevilled by twitchy controls and a lack of draw distance. Two player *Burnout* is still the best multiplayer show in PSP-

town because there's simply no greater thrill than dishing out a spectacular Takedown to your adversary just inches from the finish line, at the sort of ludicrous speeds usually reserved for jet aircraft, and then crowing about it for the rest of the day. If the look of incandescent rage etched onto your vanquished opponent's face afterwards wasn't enough, the fact you get to make off with their car makes it even more satisfying.

GTA



More than a few eyebrows were raised when the prospect of multiplayer *GTA* was first announced along with details of *Liberty City Stories*' Wi-Fi mode. Sure,

it sounded like a great idea, but would Rockstar really be able to pull it off? And wouldn't a full *GTA* game push the tiny PSP to the limit, without the added burden of deathmatch, defend the base, and capture the flag modes? Suffice to say that those eyebrows have now been lowered. *Liberty City Survivor* is just about the most fun you can have with five other people without taking your clothes off. Although knowing Rockstar, *Naked GTA* would probably be a hit too.

APE ACADEMY



You might be under the impression that this bizarre series of quirky minigames may lose their appeal after a short time, a bit like those PG Tips adverts featuring a family of chimps that we smirked at back in the day, but are far too mature to countenance now. But you'd be wrong. Those PG Tips ads are still brilliant. And likewise *Ape Academy* just gets more and more enjoyable the longer you play, meaning it's certain to lead to furiously competitive Wi-Fi contests with your mates, as you battle it out in classic tests of intellectual prowess like Paper, Scissors, Stone, and One Metre Dash. Top banana!

VIRTUA TENNIS



Ignore the fact that 'Tiger' Tim Henman celebrates winning a point with the sort of limp-wristed exuberance traditionally associated with a troupe of morris dancers, because *Virtua Tennis* provides an insanely absorbing slice of Wi-Fi fun that's guaranteed to get

your competitive fire burning, and have you smack-talking and cursing your luck with a ferocity that would make John McEnroe blush. A stunning game in single-player mode, Sega's sports sim has always come into its own in multiplayer - a more addictive, more compelling, or truer test of skill you couldn't wish to find.

GRIPSHIFT



It may look like yet another PSP racing game, but *Gripshift* is so much more - a racer-puzzler-platform-action game to be precise. And it's in Wi-Fi battles that this *Super Monkey Ball Deluxe* meets *Wacky Races* gem really comes into its own. With Deathmatch and Reverse Tag modes, the option to race against your buddies on individual levels, and even the chance to compete at a charming selection of minigames, including Bomb Pool and Penguin Bowling, there's enough variety in this jack-of-all-trades to warrant some serious Wi-Fi action.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF



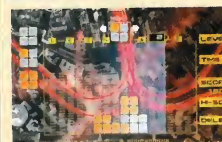
Golf is excruciatingly dull. Fact. *Everybody's Golf*, by contrast, is genius. Dispensing with all the rubbish that makes golf such a tedious excuse for a sport, and concentrating on the basics - get your ball in the hole before your opponent - this intuitive, innovative, and instantly accessible game lives up to its name: it really is for everybody. And it's perfectly suited to Wi-Fi - just play as many holes as you've got time for. Be warned though - you'll soon find yourself quickly clearing your schedule once you're edging ahead of your mates on the golf course.

METAL GEAR ACID



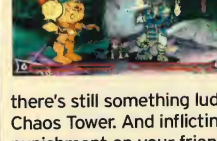
If you're still having a hard time getting your head around the concept of Solid Snake being confined to a board game, or scratching your head at the elaborate rules to this tricky title, chances are you're oblivious to the joys of Link Battles, the multiplayer mode that makes *Acid* one hell of a trip. Taking place in *Metal Gear Solid's* VR setting, both players are equipped with two characters each, and you'll have to outmanoeuvre your opponent to get your hands on a number of Pythagoras discs if you want to come out on top. Initially it's incredibly complex, and even for the battle-hardened it can occasionally be mind-bogglingly frustrating. But this tension-filled test of tactics, strategy and patience is always a blast.

LUMINES



This stunningly original mix of puzzles and music is genuinely enchanting in single-player mode, a whimsical blend of sight and sound that tests your quick thinking and reactions even as it mesmerises you with its glowing visuals. In versus mode, however, it's simply sublime. Battling your opponent for the highest score and the longest play before you run out of room at the top of the screen, you've also got to concentrate on fighting for horizontal space by dropping slick combos. And if that sounds even a little tricky, rest assured that it's far, far more fiddly than you can possibly imagine, and yet absurdly addictive.

DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER



Although control issues mar this greatest-hits type collection from Capcom's fighting series, there's still something ludicrously enjoyable about *Chaos Tower*. And inflicting your own brutal brand of punishment on your friends is undoubtedly the game's highlight. With no sign of the lag that made the Xbox Live version utterly insufferable, *Darkstalker's* gorgeous 2D sprites run so smoothly against the vibrant collection of backdrops that you'd have to be a cold-hearted curmudgeon to find this anything other than an endearing treat.

NBA STREET SHOWDOWN



It's important to be a gracious winner. But somehow the prospect of not only pummeling your mate in a quick pick-up game, but rubbing it in by subjecting them to an endless amount of unnecessary showboating in the process, is just too damn sweet to resist. Drop an eye-popping crossover, followed by a quick fakeout, and - bang! - your opponent's on his ass and you've arrowed in a three from downtown. Nothing but net, baby. Sweet.



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WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THE NEXT PACKED ISSUE

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As the kid in Jurassic Park said: "Cool night-vision!"

THE GODFATHER

It's a Sicilian message. It means EA sleeps with the fishes

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Does the brave new dawn of PSP herald the end of home console dominance?

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PREVIEWS

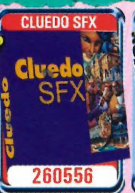
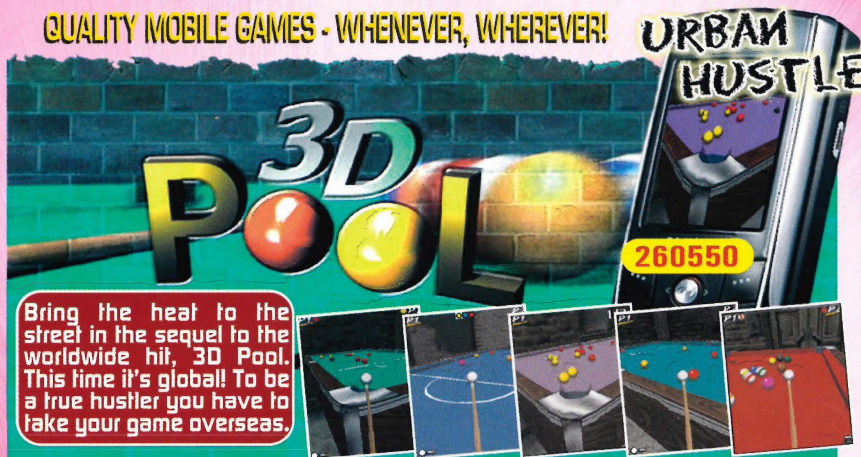
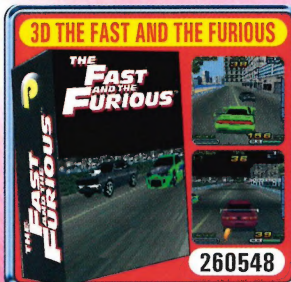
- Football Manager 2006
- Metal Gear Ac!d 2
- Dexter
- Gran Turismo 4 Mobile
- Outrun 2006: Coast To Coast

REVIEWS

- SOCOM: US Navy SEALs Fireteam Bravo
- Key Of Heaven
- Breath Of Fire III

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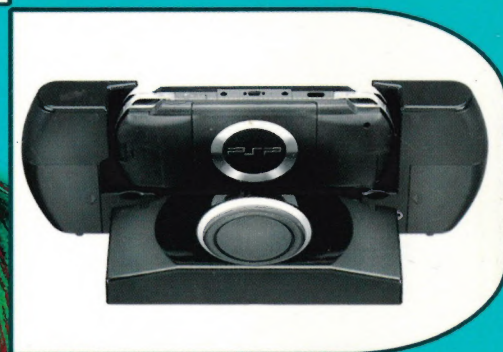
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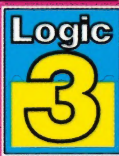
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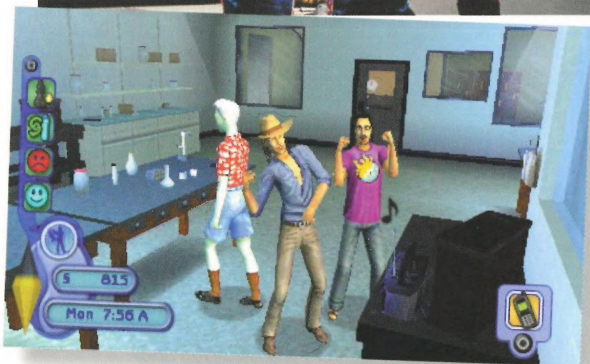
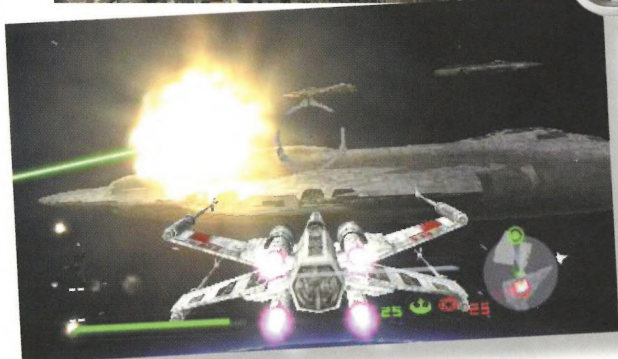
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- A** Vice City
- B** Sin City
- C** Liberty City Stories



NAME

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ANSWER (PLEASE TICK BOX) A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

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